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The American Shotgun House: A Study of its Evolution and the Enduring Presence of the Vernacular in American Architecture

Lillian McRae
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

The American Shotgun House: A Study of its Evolution and the Enduring Presence of the Vernacular in American Architecture

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Honors Program of the Department of Architecture in the Fay Jones School of Architecture, University of Arkansas.

Lillian Holcomb McRae

Thesis Committee:
Chair, Ethel Goodstein-Murphree, Ph.D.
Member, Marlon Blackwell, M.Arch.
Member, Kimball Erdman, M.L.A.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The oldest shotgun house documented in the Notarial Archives of New Orleans was sold in November of 1833 in the French Quarter on Bourbon Street. This detail alone suggests that the shotgun house type has existed in America for nearly 180 years. The history of the shotgun, an American vernacular typology traditionally defined as being one room wide and three to four rooms long, is extensive and has been addressed by a wide range of architects and historians. Thorough research regarding the origins of the shotgun house by John Michael Vlach are significant in tracing the linage of the typology from Haiti to New Orleans where it continued to spread throughout the southern United States.

Due to its extensive past and employ of adaptation, the shotgun house has many forms and styles that have evolved throughout history including the two-bay, three-bay and four-bay framed structures as well as the camelback addition that allowed for multi-story dwelling. The house type continues to change and adapt to a new era of inhabitants who are focused on living in a house that is efficient and sustainable. The new interests in the shotgun house have led to architectural adaptations of the plans and details of the house which have resulted in the redefinition of this famous typology.

This thesis investigates the evolution of the American shotgun house through plans, elevations and photographs to define the formal, architectural differences and similarities between contemporary shotgun houses of the 21st century and the traditional, historic shotgun houses of the late 19th and 20th centuries. More specifically, this study will explore whether or not the once distinct, vernacular shotgun house still exists as a vernacular housing type in its contemporary construction.

Part one of the research process reviews the historic past of the shotgun house and determines the characteristics that compose the traditional, vernacular shotgun houses built in the United States as seen in chapters I and II of the thesis. This was done through the formal analysis of the shotgun houses found in America between the 1840s and the 1940s, prior to the Second World War when the housing typology began to experience significant, formal architectural changes leading to the construction of a new housing type, the contemporary shotgun house. After taking into consideration shotguns houses with multiple bays as well as camelback additions, select examples were compared to contemporary shotgun houses that have been constructed in the 21st century.

Part two of the research determines the characteristics that comprise the contemporary shotgun houses constructed in the United States. Drawing principally on architectural historical methods of research, I proposed that the contemporary shotgun is one that while constructed of modern materials and technologies still evidences the influences of or retains organizational and formal qualities of the traditional American shotgun house. Chapter III of the thesis focuses on three contemporary shotgun iterations from the 21st century that best fit this description by possessing modern amenities but still having the essential qualities characteristic of the shotgun house. The three houses that retain such qualities include the Kiwi House in Baton Rouge, Louisiana by the architecture firm Plusone, co-owned by Daivd Baird (2011), the Kaplan House or Shot-trot in Houston, Texas by architect Brett Zamore (2001-2003) and the FLOAT House in New Orleans, Louisiana by Thom Mayne and Morphosis Architects for Brad Pitt's Make It Right Foundation in collaboration with University of California, Los Angeles graduate students (2009). These three houses were analyzed extensively in plan, elevation and photographs as well as through site visits made to both New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Other works were also

considered during the data analysis but the focus remained on the three abovementioned houses. Part three of the thesis shows the connections, similarities and differences between the contemporary shotgun house and the traditional typology using comparative analysis described below. The final phase of this research, presented in chapter IV, addresses the larger research question to determine whether or not the evolution and adaptation of the American shotgun house has transformed from a vernacular architecture to an architecture that fails to consider the immediate region and culture which voids the presence of vernacular qualities.

METHODOLOGY

Formal analysis is a specific type of visual description that seeks to explain a visual structure without considering historic or cultural content.[1] This particular method was applied when reviewing images of any kind comprising plans, elevations and photographs. This analysis added additional support to the study of each house selected and allowed for the focus to remain solely on the architectural style and typology, thus allowing for the researcher to build and confirm his/her own theories and conclusions without bias.

All data collected was compiled and analyzed as a whole. Data included both textual and graphic analysis. The information acquired from the comparisons between the contemporary and traditional shotgun houses was placed in a historic context and provided chronological evidence to support the presence of significant changes to the layout and aesthetics of the typology. The conclusions reached through research and analysis revealed the similarities and differences between the contemporary shotgun house and the traditional camelback, double bay and other shotgun house styles.

[1] Munsterberg, Marjorie. "Writing About Art ." Formal Analysis- Writing About Art. Marjorie Munsterberg, 2009. Web. 29 Apr 2012. <http://writingaboutart.org/pages/formalanalysis.html>.

CONCLUSION

Because the modern world holds sustainability in such high regard, small, efficient homes are in high demand. This thesis hypothesizes that this popular trend is changing the look of the American shotgun house which has consequently lost its locality due to the incorporation of features which fail to take into consideration culture and region. The modern iteration of the shotgun house has allowed for the typology to become interchangeable throughout the United States as it is conducive to a sustainable design which had its roots in the once vernacular form. Substantial information used to explore this hypothesis was provided through personal contact with the houses as well as through the analysis of available texts and archival drawings. Both the text and drawings were located through credible sources such as the websites of the architects and the University of Arkansas Library system. As much information as possible came from direct contact with the architects via email. These investigations revealed both connections and disconnections between the shotgun houses through the 19th century up to the 21st century as well as the circumstances and the adaptations that led to the possible absence or upholding of the vernacular element of the shotgun typology. In conclusion, the research provided a detailed evolution of the formal, architectural aspects of the American shotgun house as well as introduced the question of the existence of vernacular architecture in the 21st century. Accordingly, this research has the potential to inform both the history and praxis of architecture.

CHAPTER ONE: HISTORY OF THE SHOTGUN HOUSE

Many works have been published on the topics of shotgun houses and vernacular architecture but even with an extensive collection of articles and books on these subjects that amount from centuries of research, holes in the exploration stand out. Understanding the American shotgun house structurally and architecturally creates the opportunity to understand the evolutionary process of the shotgun house from the 19th to 21st centuries and allows for a better understanding of this unique housing type as well as what it means for today's modern society. Dividing the research into broad housing types that lead into a more defined study specifically involving the shotgun typology and ending with a look at the modern transformation of the shotgun allows for all aspects of the house to be covered including history, social connotations and architectural changes made to the plan and façade.

VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE OVERVIEW

The term vernacular is best defined as an object, style or perspective that is native to a country or region.[2] Vernacular architecture, however, is rarely given a concrete definition by authors and architects alike. Loosely defined, vernacular architecture is said to be the simplest form of addressing basic human needs that takes into consideration both regionalism and the cultural building traditions that embody a vernacular construction.[3] The origins of this regional typology came about naturally when humankind was forced to make use of the native resources available to them and create a shelter that was comfortable and receptive to the local climate,

[2] Merriam Webster Inc, "Vernacular," *New World Dictionary of the American Language* (Simon and Schuster, 1984).
[3] Sarah Edwards, "Vernacular Architecture of the 21st Century," ArchDaily, http://www.archdaily.com/155224/vernacular-architecture-and-the-21st-century/ (accessed November 1, 2012).

providing a shield from the elements.[4] Traditionally, vernacular houses have been personalized and modified to accommodate the needs and styles of the occupants and reflect the vibrant culture indigenous to the community.[5]

Today, there are a range of attitudes concerning the existence of a contemporary vernacular architecture. Architect Marlon Blackwell, who designs projects all over the United States but primarily in the South, believes that all reactions related to climate, geology and cultural landscape are not necessarily vernacular building types. Blackwell also states that the "true vernacular comes from makers who are mostly anonymous, and who are self-aware but not self-conscious, more inclined to be responsive and direct than expressive, real and actual but not excessively concerned with reality per se."[6] Blackwell also suggests that vernacular architecture exists somewhere between the ideal and the improvised, all the while being the product of typological adaptations and adjustments. What is important about Blackwell's commentary is that he believes there is a new vernacular in this era, one that is mobile and a product of a transportable American society. Utilizing an architectural language and materiality indigenous to a particular region all the while fusing it with the demands of a modern lifestyle encourages the revitalization and functionality of vernacular architecture today. In turn, the infrastructure necessary to support this new, mobile vernacular results in the transformation of the regional landscape where vernacular has its historical roots.[7]

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[4] Sarah Edwards, "Vernacular Architecture of the 21st Century," ArchDaily, http://www.archdaily.com/155224/vernacular-architecture-and-the-21st-century/ (accessed November 1, 2012).
[5] Morphosis Architects Inc., "FLOAT House-Morphomedia-Morphosis Architects," http://morphopedia.com/projects/float-house (accessed November 4, 2012).
[6] Marlon Blackwell, "Architecture in a Landscape of Unholy Unions," *Journal of Architectural Education* 63, (2009), 90-95.lackwell, Marlon. "Architecture In A Landscape Of Unholy Unions." Journal Of Architectural Education 63.1 (2009): 90. Art Full Text (H.W. Wilson). Web. 12 Apr. 2012.
[7] Blackwell, "Architecture in a Landscape of Unholy Unions," 93.

In the recent publication Vernacular Modernism, Maiken Umbach and Bernd Hüppauf suggest that vernacular cultures continue to thrive in the post-industrial world with the strong revival of local and regional identity politics seen in the western United States. Umbach and Hüppauf also believe that the vernacular building is a victim of modernization but neither space nor sense of place became extinct during its evolutionary course. The difference between vernacular architecture and the modernist movement is that the vernacular has a particular sensitivity to place where the latter is a historic, architectural era.[8]

Others architects and researchers insist that the vernacular is always present whether or not the professional interest is. According to Sabatino and Webb, vernacular architecture continues to inspire projects today, though the influence may not be direct or evident. The vernacular serves an essential role in blending modernist works with the ethnographic and geographic ideals that accompany an architecture that focuses on place. Therefore, universal applications of such developments are lacking in utopian schemes due to the specifications that the vernacular must have to function as such. The traditions created by the vernacular are used in the formation of new, modern expressions or contemporary architecture. It is vital that the indigenous construction, or early vernacular typology, "…unconsciously, without intellectually formulated goals…" teaches the current population about architecture and design.[9] This is important to consider, as it suggests that modern day architecture continues to have roots in a style that has a long history and was adaptive to a specific culture for a particular use. The most important contribution to the study of vernacular architecture that Sabatino and Webb make is that the necessities that formed the original buildings like climate, materials and location are the

[8] Maiken Umbach and Bernd Huppauf, *Vernacular Modernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 1-8.
[9] M. Sabatino and B. C. Webb, "Introduction," *Journal of Architectural Education* 63, (2009), 4–5.

same factors that fuel the present day sustainability movement, which continues to have a growing impact in American construction and design. [10]

AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE

Americans judge themselves and their neighbors by where and how they live but ultimately, the importance of a house is based on its ties with family. It is the connotations with family that make a house a home.[11] When people think of American architecture, most people think of the Colonial style house despite the fact that many housing types and styles preceded it like the Spanish buildings in the southwest and Dutch settlements found throughout the northeast. It is important to note the outline for evaluating American architecture proposed by Dell Upton has become a standard for most Americans. That is to say, Americans tend to look at houses and think that if they are not colonial then they must not be of United States origins, which is not the case. A century of experimentation and adaptation to the late, medieval building type acted as the precedent for high quality buildings in the United States. Regardless of precedent and popular style, people erected their own buildings to suit their needs with materials that were closest to the site. North America and the early colonies established there did not have an indigenous architecture to work with or adapt to for the uses of the colonists. Because of this, building concepts were imported from other regions that were climate specific and not particularly appropriate for the conditions in the New World. Shortly thereafter, people began to utilize two characteristic tendencies which included the need for speedy invention and the development of an architecture that was suitable for the conditions of eastern North America. People built their own buildings and houses with their own hands as had been done all over the

[10] Sabatino and Webb, "Introduction,"4-5.
[11] Dell Upton, *Architecture in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1998), 214-219.

world for centuries and contributed to the unique architecture that began to embody the American spirit.[12]

HISTORIC PRECEDENTS

There are two main types of American vernacular architecture, the historical and the cultural or ethnographic.[13] The historical typology aims to comprehend the changes found in architectural detail by researching patterns of social structure, economic distinctions, and craft tradition. The cultural strain of vernacular architecture focuses on finding the larger patterns and common values through typological, statistical or geographical analysis of architecture. The study of vernacular architecture deals largely with visual design, historical commemoration, architectural preservation and social and artistic theory as opposed to strictly considering scholarly accounts.[14] Domestic buildings, which often fall into the category of vernacular architecture, can also be broken into two primary strains, folk houses and styled houses. Folk houses are designed without the intention of providing basic shelter as opposed to following the current trends of architectural style. Often times, these houses are built by non-professionals or the occupants themselves and are usually simple in design. Styled houses are just the opposite and strive to present a stylish façade to the world.[15]

The American shotgun house is part of the folk type of domestic architecture and has a rich cultural history embodying both the historic and cultural vernacular. Brett Zamore defines the shotgun house as being one room wide, one story tall and several rooms long with a

[12] James Marston Fitch, *American Building: The Historical Forces that Shaped It* (New York: Schoken Books, 1966), 1-4.
[13] Dell Upton, "Outside the academy: a century of vernacular architecture studies, 1890-1990," *Studies InThe History Of Art* 35, (1990), 199-213.
[14] Upton, Dell. "Outside The Academy: A Century Of Vernacular Architecture Studies, 1890 1990." Studies In The History Of Art 35.(1990): 199. Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals. Web. 27 Mar. 2012.
[15] Lee McAlester and Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), 89-90.

frontward facing gable and porch.[16] The form is narrow and is often associated with African American culture. John Michael Vlach, the authority on shotgun house architecture, has been referenced by scholars since the appearance of his seminal essay on the shotgun in 1986. Vlach is credited with uncovering the origins of the shotgun house as arising not from America, but as having roots across the sea in Haiti after evolving from West Africa. Vlach argues that the shotgun house is connected to the immigration of black slaves and freed men into the new world.[17] Students of folk architecture have been mindful of shotgun houses since 1936 when Fred B. Kniffen published "Louisiana House Types" and identified the structure as being useful for cultural regions. Kniffen noted that the number of rooms varied from house to house and that the simple structure closely resembled both trapper and oysterman house types.[18] This observation is important because it suggests a historical sequence stemming from the house and its local surroundings. One of his students, William B. Knipmeyer, believed that the shotgun evolved from Native American dwellings and that it was a precursor to the bungalow style house. He also asserted that shotguns were built only after lumber was made inexpensive and readily available. Vlach feels as though the findings of both men ignore a major aspect of the development of the shotgun house by focusing solely on local factors as opposed to origins.[19]

Architectural historians proved Knipmeyer's theory relying on mass, inexpensive lumber production incorrect by determining that the shotgun became a common fixture in New Orleans, Louisiana before the lumber boom of the 1880s. The urban shotgun was thought to have gone through a long period of development unlike the more rural version of the typology. Vlach

[16] Brett Zamore, "Cottage Industry," *Metropolis*, http://www.zamorehomes.com/PDF/zamore_metropolis.pdf (accessed November 4, 2012).
[17] John Michael Vlach, "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," In *Common Places*, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 58.
[18] Vlach, "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," 59.
[19] Ibid, 59.

concluded that the housing type must have been around for several decades as indicated by the updating of architectural details.[20] Folk houses are very slowly affected by cultural progressions and change to accommodate needs that were not considered during the initial construction of the house. [21]

Vlach's thesis suggests that the shotgun house can be traced to dwellings in Haiti which have a connection deeply rooted in West Africa. History reveals that the shotgun house had become the local housing type in New Orleans in the mid to late 1800s after thousands of Haitians immigrated to Louisiana following rebellions against the French in 1809. This event changed the racial demographic of New Orleans and created a predominately black city in 1809 made up of both free blacks and slaves. The new community created by the Haitian immigrants had social and economic success in their new environment and many free men were active in building trades. The population increase caused a housing shortage but allowed for many of the free inhabitants to build and buy houses of their choosing. It appeared as though the new housing type, the shotgun that was rising in popularity in southern Louisiana, was not rooted in America but brought over from Haiti. The forms were consistent in both regions in that the shotgun was one room wide, one story tall, had their gabled front entrance facing the road and had a front porch created by the projecting gable. Vlach proclaims that these similarities tie the shotgun houses of Port-au-Prince to New Orleans directly.[22]

Vlach's study also makes connections between the Yourba houses found in West Africa and the houses built in Haiti after the Yourba people migrated. The Yourba house is similar to the Haitian shotgun in its rectilinear form consisting of two rooms where one enters into the

[20] Ibid, 61.
[21] Ibid, 62.
[22] Vlach, "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," 70.

parlor before proceeding to the bedroom. Vlach suggests that the house type was brought from West Africa to Haiti to establish a sense of home in a new land.[23] Despite the West African roots, Vlach argues that it is the shotgun house in Haiti that is the precedent to the shotgun house in America.

The shotgun housing type did not remain solely in the southern United States but was diffused east and west up the Mississippi and along the Ohio River where it was adopted by European immigrants.[24] It was during this transition that the front-gable was adopted into the shotgun housing typology, as the Greek revival movement was prominent in American architecture from 1830 to 1850 and utilized the front-gable shape to mimic the pediment of ancient Greek temples. This trend was popular in New England and expanded across the country with the construction of the railroad. The new housing type was particularly suited to narrow urban lots, which made it a popular alternative for rapidly growing cities in the US. The shotgun became very prevalent in neighborhoods in the southern US from 1880 to 1930. Some believe that the house type already existed deep in the South having turned the one room deep hall and parlor plan sideways to accommodate narrow lots. [25] Until recently, the shotgun house has almost unanimously been associated with the African American population and considered to be their contribution to American Architecture.[26]

DEBATING ORIGINS

Jay D. Edwards, professor and director of the Fred B. Kniffen Cultural Resources Lab in the Department of Geography and Anthropology at Louisiana State University, suggests another theory that determined the orientation and beginnings of the house. Edwards argues that the

[23] Ibid, 76-77.
[24]Henry Glassie, *Vernacular Architecture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 143-144, 160..
[25] McAlester, "A Field Guide to American Houses," 90.
[26] Vlach, "The Shotgun House: An African Architectural Legacy," 58.

shotgun house originated in the late 1830s-1840s as a result of the segmentation of city lots in New Orleans. Lots had been measured according to the English system and were 64 feet long until French law required that every child in a family have an equal portion of the family inheritance, subsequently forcing subdivision of the lots. In the 1830s, the 64 foot lots were divided into sections that were 32, 21 or 16 feet wide but remained 120 to 150 French feet deep.[27]

Edwards goes on to suggest two housing types that stemmed from the Creole Cottage, the gable-sided cottage and the half versions of the Creole Cottage. The gable-sided cottage consisted of two near-square rooms that opened up onto the street with two more square rooms behind each of these and then a cabinet-loggia range of rooms. Behind the main building was a kitchen as well as some detached service buildings. These houses ranged from 32 to 36 feet wide on the street facing side of the house. Half versions of the Creole Cottage were merely one room wide and one room deep.[28]

Creole cottages pre-date shotgun houses by nearly fifty years as they start to appear during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The cottages tend to be shallower than a shotgun house but have several other distinguishing factors. The roofline is the most noticeable difference between the two housing types. Where a Creole cottage has a roof line that runs parallel to the street, the roof of a shotgun house runs perpendicular to it. A steep gabled roof houses a half-story on the second floor of a Creole cottage but this is not the case in the hipped roofs on a shotgun house which do not contain a second story unless it is of the camelback typology. An essential part of the shotgun house is the gallery that facilitates porch culture and

[27] Jay D. Edwards, "New Orleans Shotgun: A Cultural Geography," *Culture After the Hurricanes Rhetoric and Reinvention on the Gulf Coast*, ed. M.B. Hackler (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), 44-90.
[28] Edwards, "New Orleans Shotgun A Cultural Geography," 52.

allows for the house to be set further back onto the lot, while the Creole cottage is built right up to the sidewalk with a slight overhang.[29] The connection between these typologies and the formation of the shotgun house comes into play when it became necessary to expand the modest Creole Cottage. In order to get the most out of the small lot size, builders turned the house sideways on the lot where the narrow end of the structure became the front entrance that faced the street. This simple adaptation became very popular and grew to become the dominant housing type in New Orleans.[30]

Another one of Edward's arguments discredits Vlach's theory of the origins of the American shotgun house. Members of the New Orleans architectural community disagree with Vlach claiming that there is insufficient evidence to support the existence of the shotgun house prior to 1840 and therefore cannot be the result of Haitian immigration. By challenging Vlach and accepting the hypothesis stated above, the contributions of the free persons of color and African Americans that were made to the 19th century American cultural landscape are greatly minimized. Their role then makes the shotgun house an asset as opposed to a product of development with credit given to land developers and speculators for forming the shotgun crescent in New Orleans that is home to a great number of houses of this architectural typology.[31]

DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN SHOTGUN VARIATIONS

The name "shotgun" is derived from the idea that the straight through floor plan would allow a bullet to travel from the front end of the house to the back unobstructed. The house is built without hallways and in most cases extends one room behind the other ranging from two or

[29] JAnderson, "Two-Bay Creole Cottage," *Two-Bay Creole Cottage Preservation in the Present Blog*, http://blog.prcno.org/2009/08/19/two-bay-creole-cottages/ (accessed October 20, 2012).
[30] Edwards, "New Orleans Shotgun A Cultural Geography," 52.
[31] Edwards, "New Orleans Shotgun A Cultural Geography," 59.

more rooms deep.[32,33] There are three basic forms of shotgun houses; two-bay, three-bay and four-bay types. The two-bay shotgun is characterized by two openings in the façade and a hall-less entrance that focuses on rear extension of space as opposed to creating lateral space. The four-bay shotgun house lends itself to a double dwelling where two units share a single wall in the middle of the house and one roof while the three-bay shotgun is the most spacious of the types and is more private. Unlike the two- and four-bay houses, the three-bay typology has a gallery-like hallway that serves as a passageway between rooms.[34]

A NEW IDENTITY FOR THE AMERICAN SHOTGUN HOUSE

Vlach suggested that the shotgun house was a product of evolution. Even today, it is evident that the house is going through another phase of change. Social implications relating to the shotgun are beginning to stray from the association with a lower classes and the African American society. A structure that was once centered around African ideals and the traditional importance of the integration of extended family which demonstrated the lack of importance of the individual is starting to fade. The emphasis placed on family life and the development of relationships was fostered by the identical facades of rows of shotguns where front porches helped to transform the street into a communal space for gathering. The shotgun house was a symbol of freedom for newly freed African Americans and became a means of defining themselves and a lifestyle unique to their culture. [35]

Once considered to be an architecture of defiance by free men of color, the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina is New Orleans in August of 2005 caused thousands of shotguns to

[32] Samuel Wilson Jr. et al., *New Orleans Architecture The Creole Faubourgs* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, Inc., 1974).
[33] Stephen Verderber, "Five years after: three New Orleans neighborhoods," *Journal of Architectural Education* 64 (2010), 107-120.
[34] Wilson, *New Orleans Architecture: The Creole Faubourgs*," 71.
[35] Sheryl G. Tucker, "Roots: reinnovating the African-American shotgun house, Houston," *Places* 10 (1995), 64-71.

be condemned and demolished. For the city of New Orleans, these houses were their celebrated vernacular architecture, although architectural historians have put little effort into documenting and preserving New Orleans's historic shotgun houses. [36,37] New houses are being constructed to replace what was lost that embody the best of the original shotgun form while conforming to the needs of a more modern society.[38] The typical shotgun, along with its many hybrid forms, is interwoven with social and racial associations that still stand today. However, these connotations are beginning to fall apart and disassociate themselves from their once predominately African American ties as sustainability continues to be of great interest in the field of architecture.

CONCLUSION

The available literature on the shotgun typology provides abundant, historical background information and suggests a move to a more modern version of the house. However, it fails to fully investigate the evolutionary process that the house has taken in terms of formal, architectural changes made to the typology between the 19th and 21st centuries resulting in a contemporary shotgun typology. With additional research, the connections and disconnections between traditional and contemporary shotgun houses in terms of plan and articulated detail will be discovered. In addition, the question of whether or not the vernacular qualities that helped to compose the traditional American shotgun house remain present in the new constructions will be answered.

[36] Verderber, "Five Years After-Three New Orleans Neighborhoods," 1-2.
[37] Edwards, "New Orleans Shotgun A Cultural Geography," 50.
[38] Frederick S. Starr, "The New Orleans Shotgun:Down but Not Out," *The New York Times*, sec. Home & Garden, http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/22/garden/22shotgun.html?_r=0 (accessed April 12, 2012).

CHAPTER TWO: THE EVOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN SHOTGUN HOUSE

The shotgun house falls within a category of housing typologies that can be found in both rural and urban settings as it exists primarily in densely populated regions and towns along the Gulf Coast as well as in the countryside and along highways.[39,40] In America, cities such as New Orleans, LA, Louisville, KY and Miami, FL are considered to be centers of proliferation of the shotgun house, although the typology can also be found in Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas.[41] Despite the broad dispersion of the shotgun house in the southern United States, historians and scholars often turn to New Orleans for the abundance of resources and examples related to the traditional shotgun typology. The city of New Orleans is home to more than 25,000 preserved shotgun houses.[42] Due to the extensive availability of publications and examples of shotgun houses found in New Orleans, this city is the primary setting used to explore the evolution of the unique housing typology within this study.

New Orleans is a deep water port that was established in 1718 by the French in order to guard the natural portage between the Mississippi River and Bayou St. John. Drainage ditches were installed around each of original 14 city blocks as the area was prone to periodic flooding.[43] Threatening flood waters from the Mississippi, Lake Pontchartrain as well as rainwater resulted in the necessary use of levees throughout New Orleans.[44] These levees were intended to keep

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[39]Steven Holl, "Rural and Urban House Types," *Pamphlet Architecture 1-10* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1983), 34-37.
[40]Gerald Foster, *American Houses:a field guide to the architecture of the home* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), 192..
[41] Alex Caemmerer, Houses of New Orleans (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2008),16.
[42] Mary Fitzpatrick, *New Orleans' Favorite Shotguns* (New Orleans: Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans, 2007), 6.
[43] Independent Levee Investigation Team. "Chapter Four: History of the New Orleans Flood Protection System". *New Orleans Levee System*. July 31, 2006. Accessed December 8, 2012. http://www.ce.berkeley.edu/projects/neworleans/report/CH_4.pdf.
[44] Independent Levee Investigation Team. "Chapter Four: History of the New Orleans Flood Protection System".

floodwaters out but adversely allowed for the collection of rainfall within the city. During the 19th century, an influx of immigrants into the city required expansion into the lower, even more flood-prone areas of the city. In an effort to combat this issue and accommodate a larger population, residential buildings, such as the shotgun house, were raised off the street several feet to avoid damage from floodwaters. Therefore, the city has a rich history regarding the adaptation of the housing typology which can be seen in the facades and plans of the dwellings themselves.

There are several additional reasons as to why historians tend to turn towards New Orleans as a key setting to study the shotgun house in America. New Orleans is considered to be the home of the shotgun and is the most common local housing type. The typology is so well known in the region that it is often called the "Louisiana shotgun house", emphasizing its origins.[45] The housing typology was known to exist as early as the late 18th and early 19th centuries in New Orleans but it was not widespread until the 1840s. Typically, shotgun houses were either custom built by carpenters or were assembled as "prefabs" made popular by magazines such as the *Product Catalogue* and the *Roberts Catalogue,* where more than 700 manufactured items including moldings, handrails, dormers, doors, eves, brackets as well as three complete shotgun houses could be ordered.[46] The majority of façadal decorations and architectural details were inspired by these catalogues and could be purchased during the 1880s and 1890s.[47]

This chapter explores the evolution of the form and style of the shotgun house in America with an emphasis on the houses found throughout New Orleans, providing the foundation on

[45] Caemmerer, *House of New Orleans*,192.
[46] Ibid, 12.
[47] Roulhac Toledano, *A Pattern Book of New Orleans Architecture* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, Inc., 2012), 110.

which the Kiwi House, the FLOAT House and the Shot-trot House will be compared. Architectural styles, as well as layout, are presented to demonstrate how and why the shotgun house has evolved in the 21st century and why vernacular principles are still present in the design of the house today.

TRADITIONAL VARIATIONS ON FORMS OF THE SHOTGUN HOUSE

New Orleans' city layout, with large, square blocks and narrow lot divisions, encouraged the development of a housing plan with one room aligned behind another during the mid-1800s when laws instated by the French dictated the divisions of lots throughout the city.[48] Within New Orleans there are three traditional types of shotgun houses all with a multitude of variations; the single barrel shotgun, the double barrel shotgun and the camelback shotgun house. The single barrel shotgun house is composed of rooms that are laid out one behind the other in a straight line from the font of the house to the back.[49] Usually suited for one family, the single barrel shotgun is less common than the double barrel shotgun house in New Orleans because the double barrel plan is made up of two single shotgun houses placed side by side which allowed for more space and accommodated larger families.[50] Additionally, these forms of the house are further defined by the number of bays, vertical sections found on the exterior walls which contain one door or window, on the façade of the house.[51,52] In New Orleans, shotgun houses varied from having two-bay facades to those which had six.[53] Two-bay, three-bay and four-bay homes are present throughout all of Louisiana but the four-bay, double-shotgun house proved to be the most

[48] Holl, "Rural and Urban House Types," 34.
[49] Lloyd Vogt, *New Orleans Houses A House-Watcher's Guide* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, Inc., 1985), 23.
[50] Caemmerer, *House of New Orleans*, 16.
[51] Ibid, 79.
[52] See diagrams created by Steven Holl in *Pamphlet Architecture 1-10.*
[53] Ibid, 12.

prevalent form of the house.

The simplest form of the single barrel shotgun house has two bays in which the façade is composed of two openings with a door and window that open onto a small porch (Figure 1).[54] The entrance typically opens into a hall-less space with two rooms that share a chimney on their common wall.[55] Each of the rooms in the house has openings on two or three sides of the walls allowing for abundant light and ventilation.[56] The typical single barrel, two-bay shotgun house lacked corridors making it necessary to go through one room to reach another (Figure 2).[57] The original layout of the rooms in the shotgun house put the kitchen as the last room in the succession which opened onto a backyard.[58] However, plans of the shotgun house reveal that the layout of the houses favored a plan which put the bedrooms and most private areas at the rear of the house while the kitchen and living room, more public areas, were located at the front of the shotgun near the street (Figure 3). Another variation of the single barrel shotgun house is one that has three bays (Figure 4). The three-bay form of the house is more spacious than the two-bay structure. Typically, the three-bay, single shotgun has an interior hallway upon entrance along a full side gallery that acts as a corridor between the rooms. The floor plan differs from the two-bay shotgun house where the long side hall gives access to each room as opposed to having to pass through one room to get to the next (Figure 5).[59]

[54] Malcolm Heard, *French Quarter Manual An Architectural Guide to New Orlean's Vieux Carre* (New Orleans: Tulane School of Architecture, 1997), 50.
[55] Samuel Wilson Jr. et al., *New Orleans Architecture The Creole Faubourgs* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, Inc., 1974), 71.
[56] Heard, *French Quarter Manual; an architectural guide to New Orleans' Vieux Carre*, 50.
[57] Ibid, 49.
[58] Heard, *French Quarter Manual; an architectural guide to New Orleans' Vieux Carre*, 48.
[59] Wilson, *New Orleans Architecture: The Creole Faubourgs*, 71-72.

A double barrel shotgun house is the result of two joined single shotgun houses often built by investors as rental property, and was the predominate style during the 1880s (Figure 6).[60] In this form of the house there are usually four bays, two windows and two entrances, across the front façade.[61] Each of the two units are one room wide and several rooms deep, consistent with the plan of a single barrel shotgun house (Figure 7).[62] Double bay shotguns eliminated the cross ventilation that was possible in the single shotguns in favor of creating a property that doubled the density of a single shotgun house. In New Orleans, it became a house where two generations of the same family could live separately but under the same roof.[63] Some of these houses were later opened up to create a larger single family dwelling.[64]

The final major type of traditional shotgun house is that which has a camelback addition, or a second story (Figure 8). The camelback addition can be found on both single and double barrel shotgun houses with one story in the front and a "hump" in the back of the house which creates a second story (Figure 9).[65,66] A stairway is located between the rear rooms and usually has its own exterior door that opens onto a side alley.[67] The origins of this particular development in the shotgun house typologies is uncertain though it has been suggested that taxes were levied on the height of a house along the street front as opposed to the back or rear of the establishment, therefore, houses of the camelback type were counted and taxed as a one-story house.[68] Architect and preservationist Lloyd Vogt believes that the camelback addition is a

[60] Toledano, *A Pattern Book of New Orleans Architecture*, 51.
[61] Holl, "Rural and Urban House Types," 36.
[62] Wilson, *New Orleans Architecture: The Creole Faubourgs*, 72.
[63] Heard, *French Quarter Manual; an architectural guide to New Orleans' Vieux Carre*, 51.
[64] Caemmerer, *House of New Orleans*, 12.
[65] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 23.
[66] Heard, *French Quarter Manual; an architectural guide to New Orleans' Vieux Carre*, 52.
[67] Ibid, 52.
[68] Holl, "Rural and Urban House Types," 37.

descendent of the Creole-cottage.[69] Camelback shotgun houses were common from the 1860s to the early 1900s in New Orleans and, like the other forms of the shotgun house, employed cost-effective materials and land use.[70]

STYLES USED TO DEFINE THE EXTERIOR OF THE SHOTGUN HOUSE

Shotgun houses have been adorned with elements that are representative of almost all of the architectural styles that appeared during the late 19th century, including Greek revival, Italianate, Eastlake, Bracketed and Classical revival styles. In regards to construction, the wood frame is most commonly used although a few masonry examples do exist particularly in New Orleans.[71] Despite numerous changes in the styles of the shogun's façade, the house maintains the same form throughout all decorative applications.

While the focus regarding the American shotgun house relies primarily on New Orleans, it is important to consider the broader context regarding formal and stylistic changes made to dwellings in response to popular approaches in design taken throughout the United States, particularly in the South. The architectural "taste" associated with New Orleans dominated the entire Mississippi River Valley and spread along the Gulf Coast for nearly a century.[72]Cultural influences from both Spain and France merged together to create a subtropical, colonial city with an abundance of Mediterranean architectural taste.[73] This approach was well suited to New Orleans as it built residences and commercial structures that were designed to adapt to the hot weather much like the Spanish and French experienced along the Mediterranean coast.

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[69] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 23.
[70] Ibid, 23.
[71]Foster, *American Houses: a field guide to the architecture of the home*, 192.
[72] Edward W. Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh. 1960. *The South builds; new architecture in the Old South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 5.
[73] Edward W. Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh. *The South builds; new architecture in the Old South*, 5.

THE GREEK REVIVAL STYLE

The Greek revival style draws on ancient Greek architecture, specifically houses, for inspiration and is characterized by simplicity, strength and dignity all of which are embodied in the design. Most shotgun houses built in New Orleans before 1850 are of the Greek revival style.[74] A major staple of Greek revival architecture is the Greek-key doorway, an overlapping lintel and a slight flaring out of the face of the surround from the top to the bottom. Other features of the style include a low-pitched roof, an entablature supported by Greek columns, as well as Greek ornamentation consisting of dentils, rosettes, palmettes, honeysuckles, egg-and-dart molding and acanthus leaves. Three classical orders were associated with ancient Greece and were manifested in the form of Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns. In New Orleans, the most frequently used orders were Doric and Iconic. It was not until the popularization of the Italianate style that the Corinthian order came to be used more often.[75]

The Greek revival style was popular throughout the nation in the first half of the 19th century.[76] The progression of this particular style in the South, however, was halted due to the commencement of the Civil War in 1861 as the region suffered from stifling poverty which transcended two to three generations.[77] Due to the lack of progress and architectural advancement made in the South during the Civil War, Greek revival architecture is difficult to find preserved, especially in shotgun houses where the form has likely been replaced either with an updated style or new form entirely.

When applied to the shotgun house, the Greek revival style manifested itself in the form of bays that opened onto a front gallery with full louvered shutters and very simple moldings.

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[74] Wilson, *New Orleans Architecture: The Creole Faubourgs*, 71.
[75] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 63-65.
[76] Waugh, *The South builds; new architecture in the Old South*, 5.
[77] Ibid, 5.

Either Doric or Ionic columns would stand on the front porch holding up a detailed entablature with ornament defined by dentils and a low parapet. Smooth stucco was often used on the front façade while the sides and rear of the house were adorned with weatherboard siding. The entablature and parapet would completely conceal a low-pitched hip roof (Figure 10).[78]

THE ITALIANATE STYLE

Greek revival architecture in New Orleans began to take on more ornamented characteristics around the 1850s which evolved into the Italianate style. The style was not exclusive to shotgun houses as it was the prevailing style in residential architecture throughout the 1860s and 1870s. The Italianate and had many Victorian-era design influences such as vibrant colors as well as beveled and stained glass. The Doric and Ionic columns that were popular for the Greek revival style were replaced by the third Greek order, the Corinthian column. Consistent with the ornate detail associated with the Italianate style, the Corinthian column exhibited floral characteristics and were often fluted. It was common in a double-gallery house to find both Ionic and Corinthian columns on the façade but on different floors. [79]

The Italianate style was inspired by the architecture affiliated with the Italian Renaissance as well as the rural constructions found in northern Italy, which were introduced to America via the English. The Italian Renaissance in the United States gave rise to an architecture that was conducive to the regional needs of the South as they were similar to the architectural solutions offered to combat the demands of the mild, Mediterranean climate on the Italian coast.[80] The major features associated with the style include "bracketed cornices with paired brackets in the entablature aligned over columns, segmental arches, stilted arches, a pronounced arch keystone,

[78] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 65.
[79] Ibid, 85.
[80] Edward W. Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh, *The South Builds; new architecture in the Old South, 5*.

quoins, rustication and decorative parapets".[81] Roofs remained low and discreet while windows and doors frequently terminated with segmental-arch heads.[82]

Like a shotgun house decorated in the Greek revival style, an Italianate version of the shotgun house also has an entablature and parapet supported by columns of the Doric or Ionic order though it is far more ornamental. The gallery is framed in arched openings between each of the columns. These arches can also be found in the windows and door transoms on the front of the shotgun. In the case of a double barrel shotgun house housing more than one family, a low, curved partition would divide the gallery into two equal halves. Molded cornices are common atop both the windows and doors. On the sides of the front corners of the façade, quoins were commonly used as additional ornament. A bracketed cornice and jigsaw details are common features of the entablature, while a highly ornate parapet caps the façade and conceals the low-pitched roof (Figure 11).[83]

THE EASTLAKE STYLE

The Eastlake architectural style, prevalent from 1880 to 1905 during the late Victorian period, was made popular by English architect Charles Locke Eastlake. The Eastlake style was comprised of columns and balusters that had been changed from their original and substantial forms into that which resembled the legs of an extravagant dining table and chair legs. This era brought an abundant use of porches and galleries, already a prominent attribute of the shotgun house, and embellished them with brackets, spindle bands and piecework. Barge-boards, a board that concealed roof timbers that projected over gables, were often times decorated with jigsaw

[81] Ibid, 85.
[82] Ibid, 85.
[83] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 86.

appliqué.[84,85] The facades of Eastlake-styled houses and buildings were highly textured and quaint in appearance. Glass was a major Eastlake feature and came in forms such as beveled, etched and stained. More expensive estates featured stained glass in lead frames while the more economic home displayed stained glass in wooden frames found in both doors and windows.[86] In common with other shotgun house styles, the Eastlake houses were wood-framed. The style tends to be referred to as Victorian although that is not accurate as Victorian refers to a period of time which embodied several architectural styles including Italianate and Eastlake.[87]

The Eastlake style shotgun house is common throughout New Orleans. An openwork or spindle band frieze is supported by ornate fan brackets and spans the opening between thin turned colonnettes. These colonnettes are used to support a gable-on-hip roof which is accentuated by a center gable and can include two smaller gables on either side. The central gable often displays a stained-glass attic window which is surrounded by sunburst panel work and is sometimes topped with a rooster-comb finial. The entrance and windows are ornamentally carved and often feature stained-glass panels and transoms above. Full length louvered shutters continue to be used as well as corner quoins on the siding of the front of the house (Figure 12).[88]

THE BRACKET STYLE

Bracket style architecture, like the Eastlake style, was popular from 1880 to 1905 and fell into the broad category of the Victorian style. The bracket style is also called the New Orleans Millwork style and Victorian Italianate style. The bracket is a defining feature of the houses where large brackets support the roof overhang above a gallery hence the name given to this

[84] Merriam Webster Inc., "*Bargeboard- Definition and More from the Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary*," http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/bargeboard (accessed October 1, 2012).
[85] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 97.
[86] Ibid, 97.
[87] Ibid, 97.
[88] Ibid, 98.

particular style. The features conducive to the formal characteristics of Bracket architecture are a blend of Late Victorian ornamentation and Italianate brackets. Prefabricated lathe and jigsaw work ordered from catalogues allowed for the brackets to take on different proportions where, unlike its Italianate relative, horizontal dimensions became greater than the vertical. Victorian-era embellishments like the sunburst became well suited to the Bracket style of ornamentation. Ornate details found in Eastlake and Queen Anne styles which boasted turned balusters, decorative roof shingles, and stained glass embellishments to doors and attic windows were also conducive to the Bracket façades. [89] The Bracket style has close ties with the Eastlake style where two story residences have been known to house the turned colonnettes and bracketed spindle bands inward in the Eastlake manner on the first-floor gallery with use of the Bracketed technique on the second-story gallery.[90]

Architecture of the late Victorian era, especially in the South, emphasized the work of the self-made man who acted as the fuel behind the industrial age. The result was an eclectic architecture that was influenced by a variety of styles but ultimately displayed the designer's own creativity.[91] The styles of this era, including Eastlake and that which utilized brackets, demonstrated the diverse application of a variety of influences found throughout the Victorian period as seen in the intricate motifs displayed in glass and wood decor. The age of the machine was dominating this era in American history and the celebration of industrialism in architecture was evident in the use of manufactured, prefabricated facadal decorations.

The Bracketed style shotgun house is one of the most common houses found in New Orleans today (Figure 13). The brackets are used to support a typically gable-on-hip roofing

[89] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 103.
[90] Ibid,103.
[91] Edward W. Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh, *The South Builds; new architecture in the Old South, 6.*

type. Decorative shingles that resembled fish scales were also used to embellish the gable-on-hip roof. Stained glass is often used in the doors as well as in the attic windows of the gable on the roof. Sunburst motifs, like those found in the Eastlake style, continued to make appearances in the facades of shotgun houses. The brackets, usually constructed of cypress, are found in the millwork catalogues of the late 1800s (Figure 14). Cap-molded cornices sit on top of the simple bays in the façade with operable louvered shutters on each side. Weatherboard is used on all sides and have corners decorated with quoins. Turned balusters enclose the front galleries of the shotgun houses which can be found replicated identically sitting side by side in threes or fours with the exception of different colors of paint applied to the façade of the house.[92]

THE CLASSICAL REVIVAL STYLE

In 1893, the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago featured architect Daniel Burnham's plan for the Court of Honor, which was heavily influenced by Beaux Arts inspired classicism as seen in the use of Roman architectural elements.[93] The success of the exposition led to the incorporation of all-white color schemes and the Classical revival style into architecture across the United States evoking the power and purity associated with the antiquity in Rome compared to the dark color pallet used during the Late Victorian period. The white facades also evoked connotations with cleanliness and hygiene. Classical revival houses in New Orleans were constructed between 1895 and 1920. The style was applied a variety of different sized houses. Larger houses had a more classical appearance as their huge scale was reminiscent of antiquity. Massive porticoes were the central features of Classical revival architecture and in some cases the house took on the form of a temple. For smaller houses, like the single and double barrel shotguns, three columns supported gabled front galleries and usually employed the Doric order

[92] Ibid, 104.
[93] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 103.

in design. Common features found in houses of the Classical revival style consisted of semicircular windows embedded into the pediment, a semicircular fanlight above the front door as well as modified-diamond-paned windows and a centrally placed hipped-roof dormer projecting from a supported hipped roof. Frames for the houses either used stucco or wood on brick piers with weatherboard siding and were usually painted all white. [94]

Hipped roofs are on full display in the shotgun houses that were built of the Classical revival style and often had a dormer in the center (Figure 15). Columns of the classical orders are used to support the roof over the gallery, which remains unenclosed. Classical modillions are found under the cornice which sits above a classically styled frieze and architrave. The front façade was embellished with narrow weatherboard siding while the sides of the home used a standard size of the board.[95]

While the New Deal, proposed by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration, provided jobs for many unemployed and skilled American craftsmen, the resulting architecture was often sterile as projects began to lose the intimate relationship between architect and client. Bureaucratic control of building projects both residential and commercial resulted in an engineering approach to architecture where statistics were favored over aesthetics. Herein lies a plausible reason as to why styles like Classical revival and Bungalow became popular as both were examples of architecture which emphasized simple forms and geometries as opposed to the ornate detailing seen in the Eastlake and Bracket styles.[96]

[94] Ibid, 129.
[95] Ibid, 134.
[96] Edward W. Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh, *The South Builds; new architecture in the Old South, 6.*

THE BUNGALOW STYLE OR "CALIFORNIA STYLE"

The Bungalow style was developed during the early 1900s in California and quickly found its way to other parts of the country thanks to widely circulated plan books. The style is also referred to as the "California style" and became very popular in New Orleans during the 1920s and 1930s.[97] The bungalow style fit comfortably in the Arts and Crafts movement which sought to use simple, handcrafted elements as opposed to mass-produced machine ornamentation. The New Deal put the government in control of freeing craftsmen and artists from economic turmoil by employing their skills.[98] In most cases, the Bungalow was a one- or one and a half-story construction with low, simple lines and large projecting rooflines. The roof rafters were often exposed in the eves but maintained a simple, unarticulated appearance. Weatherboard siding was commonly found on the main body of the house in combination with materials like stucco or wood siding, specifically on the front porch. The porch, as with the shotgun house, was an essential design feature and was often closed in with a screen.[99]

Large, tapered square pedestals made of brick, stucco, or natural rock support the porch roofs and are a common characteristic of the style. These pedestals extended roughly three feet above porch level and were topped with straight or wooden posts. The windows were either double-hung or casement often times displaying small panes divided into various patterns which became a common feature associated with the Bungalow style. Shutters were eliminated from the house entirely in favor of the insect screen surrounding the porch. Comfort, as opposed to elegance, was clearly expressed in the style.[100]

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[97] Ibid, 141.
[98] Edward W. Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh, *The South Builds; new architecture in the Old South, 6.*
[99] Vogt, *New Orleans Houses: a house-watcher's guide*, 141.
[100] Ibid, 141.

Lloyd Vogt believes that the "Bungalow" is a style that can be applied to the shotgun house in a similar way to Bracketed or Eastlake style. Despite Vogt's analysis of the Bungalow "style", his description reveals that it is a housing typology, not a style, and therefore cannot be applied to other houses. The Craftsman style, on the other hand, is a valid style that can be used to create a particular appearance for the New Orleans shotgun house, although it is not common. The features that Vogt considers part of the Bungalow or "California style" are qualities and characteristics belonging to the Craftsman style.

ANALYSIS

Regardless of how many bays a shotgun house has, the style that the house exhibits, or whether or not there is a camelback addition to the rear of the house, shotgun houses have very similar forms and proportions that are present in all shotgun typologies. Because of limited resources in this study, measured plans and elevations from Roulhac Toledano's *A Pattern Book of New Orleans Architecture* are used throughout this section to show the connections and relationships between the proportions of the typical two-bay, three-bay, four-bay, and camelback addition shotguns.

Toledano's example of a two-bay, single shotgun house measures in at 14 feet wide and 70 feet long (Figure 16).[101] In this particular case, the width makes up exactly one fifth of the length of the house without including the front and rear porches. The height of the house is 15'2", which is also just over one fifth of the length of this house. In addition, the façade is spilt into two equal halves, or bays, through the use of three defining columns with both the door and window being of equal height and width. The façades of nearly all shotgun typologies can be

[101] Toledano, *A Pattern Book of New Orleans Architecture*, 103.

evenly divided into halves, thirds, quarters, and so on depending upon the length and width of the home as well as the use of columns or spindles.

In Toledano's example of a three-bay shotgun house, the façade is divided into three equal bays with equal heights and widths for the door and windows, much like the previous example of the two-bay structure (Figure 16). The four-bay shotgun house as well as those that are double barrel constructions or have camelback additions to the back of the house all tend to have equally divided bays and evenly sized openings in the façade (Figure 17). In the examples given by Toledano, there is a clear relationship between the width of the house and its length where the width of the shotgun house is anywhere from one third to one sixth of the length. The camelback shotgun house is unique in that it has an additional story added on the latter part of the house (Figures 18 and 19). A 70 foot long, 24 feet wide camelback house has a 42 foot upper story, which is three fifths of the length, suggesting that the carefully designed proportions are a component of all aspects of the exterior of the house.

Despite the utilitarian nature of the shotgun house, which developed as an inexpensive solution to building multiple houses on the narrow lots of New Orleans, builders seized the opportunity to vary the facades of the house by utilizing the wooden, machine-cut decoration that could be readily ordered out of catalogues.[102] Catalogues, such as *Product* kept up with the changing architectural styles that were popular during different eras of American history, specifically during the late 1880s and throughout the early 1900s. The decorations that adorned the shotgun houses seemed limited to the availability and popularity of what could be ordered from the pre-fab catalogues; therefore, the façadal treatment acts as a mask on the shotgun house as opposed to a deeply embedded style indigenous to the house. This observation further

[102] Heard, *French Quarter Manual; an architectural guide to New Orleans' Vieux Carre*, 48.

suggests that the same theory can be applied to the contemporary façade, which is explored extensively in chapter three. A recent trip by the author to Louisiana revealed the prominence of the bracket style shotgun house in neighborhoods throughout New Orleans. Unfortunately, the Italianate and Greek Revival styles are not adequately represented, perhaps due to their advanced age and a desire to update the house with a newer, more popular style.

With numerous variations in the style of the shotgun house, the limitations of the typology appear to have no boundary in terms of form. From the single barrel, double-bay shotgun house to the double barrel, four-bay house with a camelback addition, the house has truly taken on different forms to accommodate a growing population. Architectural forms in this region have been grouped into families of traditional buildings with geometrical similarities but physical variations that can distinguish many subtypes within the overall frame work.[103] According to Jay Edwards, the shotgun house embodies at least eight major geometrical form classes all of which have sub variants including the shotgun, side-hall shotgun, double, bungalow, camelback, two-story shotgun, North Shore House and the quarters shotgun.[104] Despite these supposed variations on the shotgun house, the shotgun (single barrel), double barrel and camelback are the only true traditional forms of the shotgun as the others listed resemble other housing types in the region. In addition, the bungalow is a typology in and of itself and therefore cannot be considered a shotgun house while the quarters shotgun, according to Edwards, is defined purely by its use as a small area set aside for slaves which suggest cultural, not architectural, distinguishing factors.

[103] Jay Dearborn Edwards and Nicolas Kariouk Pecquet du Bellay de Verton, *A Creole LexiconArchitecture, Landscape, People* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), xxvi.
[104] Ibid, xxvii.

The North Shore House is primarily found in the satellite summer resort area of New Orleans around Mandeville and Abita Springs and was usually constructed by African Americans during the 19th century.[105] The form of the house has an L or T-shaped extension (and L on either side of the shotgun) located on the rear of the house. The entire front of the house is surrounded by galleries which connect the rear L or Ls to the protruding front of the shotgun. The gallery can be accessed from every room in the house through several doorways which, consequently, leaves the house with very few windows if any at all. The house may be the result of the necessary expansion of the shotgun however, the housing form clearly resembles almost identical constructions in Saint Domingue and Haiti.[106] Because many of these variants on the shotgun are less common and have appeared in only one scholarly text, only the houses that exhibit the main typologies are described throughout this thesis.

With a multitude of forms including the addition of multiple bays and a second story, defining the true form of the shotgun house becomes a major challenge. The housing type is already often mistaken for the Creole Cottage, a popular housing type in New Orleans, which can be differentiated from the shotgun via roofline. According to Malcolm Heard, author of *French Quarter Manual; an architectural guide to New Orleans' Vieux Carre*, "these variants move so far from the simple single or double shotgun house that limits of the type begin to blur."[107] Today, as well as in the early 20th century, the shotgun house varies in plan as demonstrated by the L-shaped layout (Figure 20). The L-shaped plan as it is used in the 21st century, lends itself to allowing for a recessed entry into the shotgun house (Figure 21).

[105] Ibid, 142-143.
[106] Ibid, 143.
[107] Heard, *French Quarter Manual; an architectural guide to New Orleans' Vieux Carre*, 52.

Additionally, the camelback rendition of the house has taken on the addition of an entire upper story as opposed to the half-story which defines the camelback typology (Figure 22).

There is also a disconnection between the façade and the interior, as the careful proportions only appears to apply to the exterior of the house. The rooms inside of the shotgun are not dictated by the proportions established on the exterior of the home where the width has a distinct relationship with the length of the shotgun. This observation leads to the question of whether or not the contemporary version of the house follows this same trend. It is essential to understand the proportions of the shotgun house in order to see the relationship between both the traditional and contemporary typologies. Throughout the history of the traditional shotgun house, it is the form, not the style, which has remained consistent in the design, suggesting that it is the shape and configuration of the house that truly defines the shotgun.

Figure 1. Examples of two-bay, single barrel shotgun houses. The first two houses are within the Garden District of New Orleans, LA and the third house is located in the Ninth Ward of New Orleans.

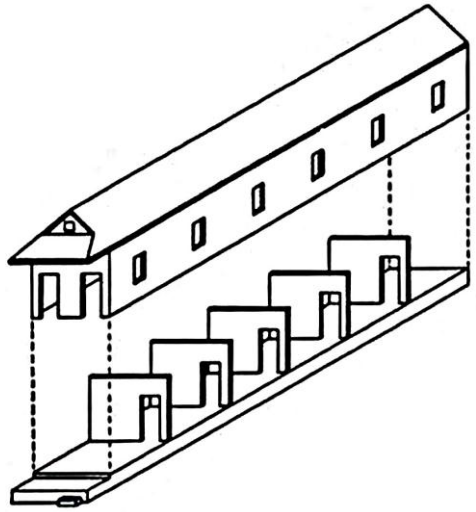

Figure 2. Exploded axonometric view of a single barrel, two-bay shotgun house.

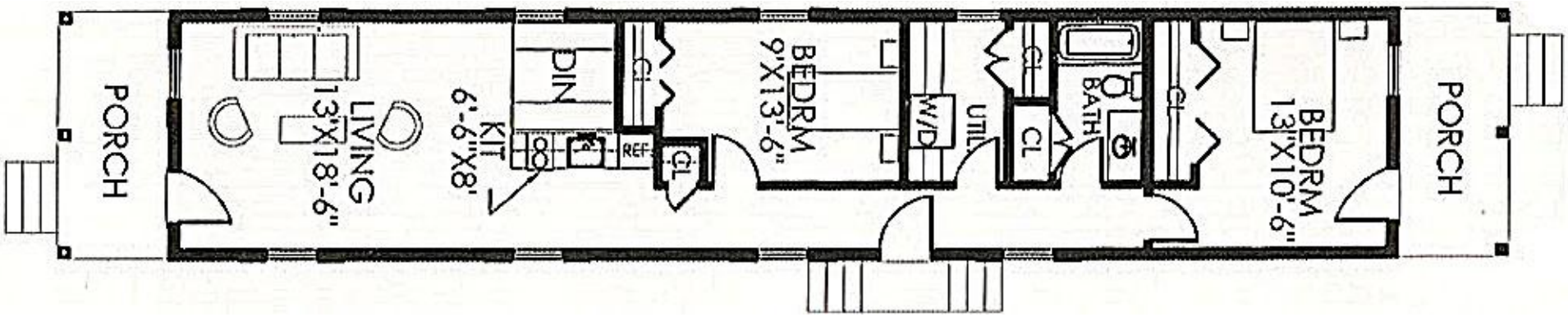

Figure 3. Plan view of a single barrel, two-bay shotgun house.

Figure 4. of three-bay, single shotgun houses. The first two houses are within the Garden District of New Orleans, LA and the third house is located in the Historic Spanish Town of Baton, Rouge, LA.

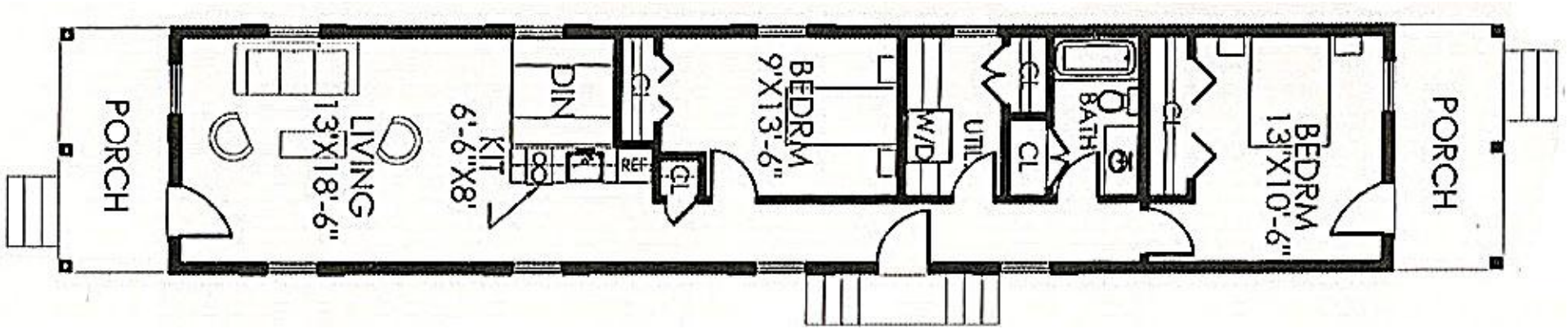

Figure 5. Plan view of a single barrel, triple-bay shotgun house.

Figure 6. Examples of four-bay shotgun houses found, in order, the French Quarter, the Garden District and the Ninth Ward all in New Orleans. Only the first and third images are double-barrel typologies as seen through the two doorways on the façades.

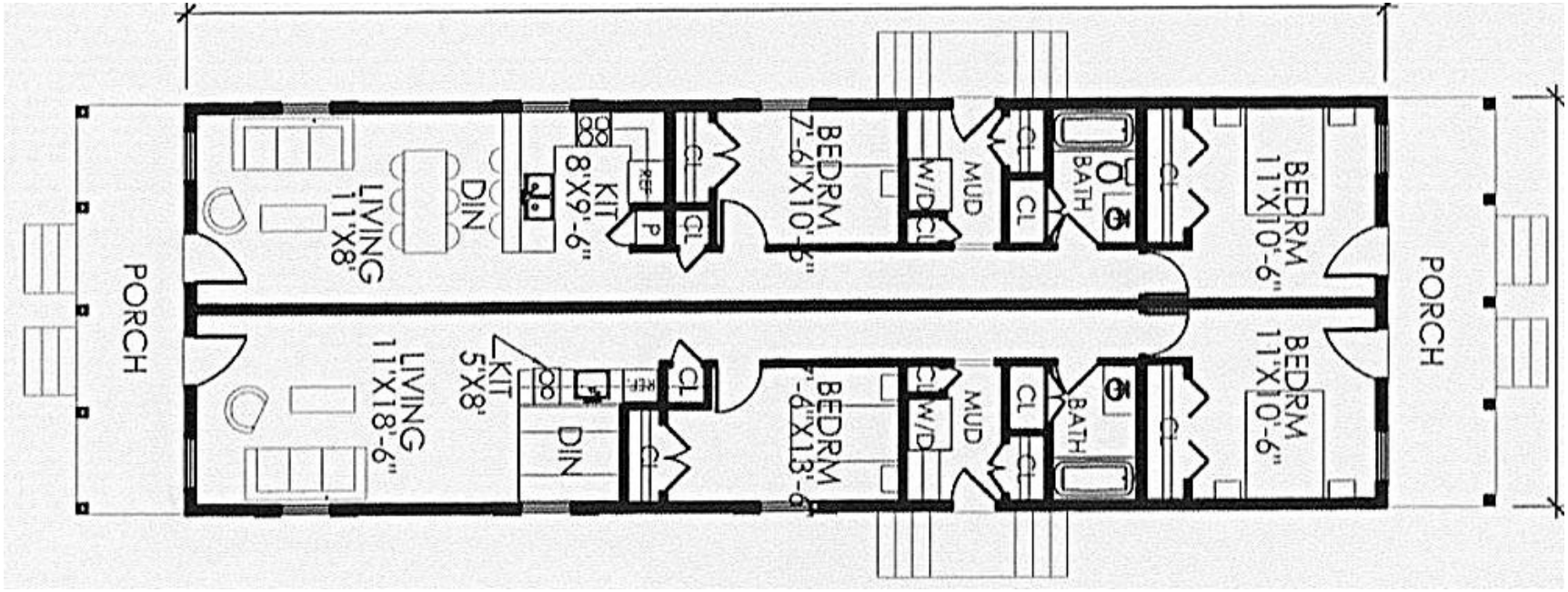

Figure 7. Plan view of a four-bay, double barrel shotgun house.

Figure 8. Examples of camelback shotgun house typologies ranging from having two to four bays. The first house is located in the Ninth Ward of New Orleans while the other two houses are found within the Garden District.

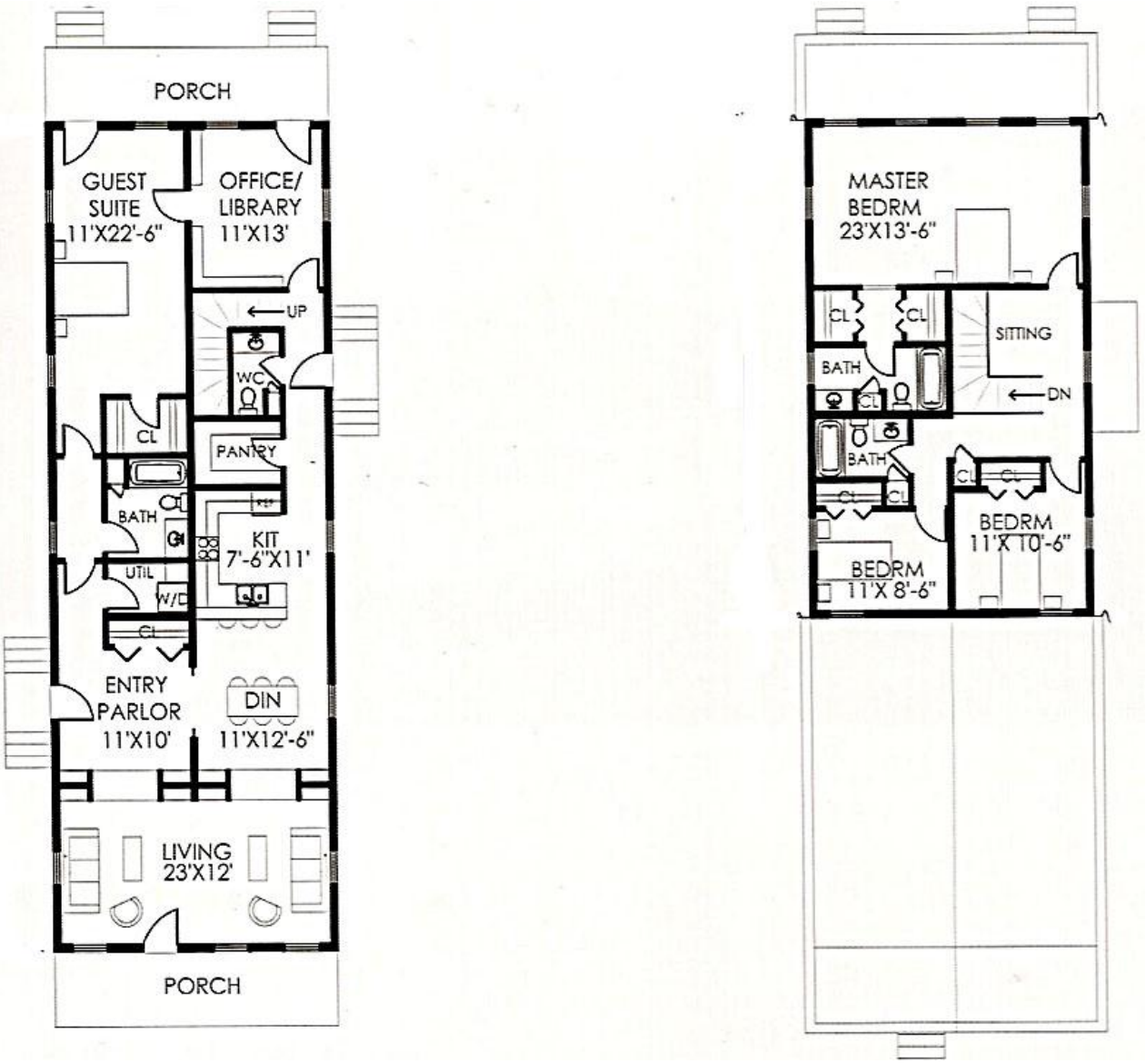

Figure 9. Plan view of a single barrel, four-bay shotgun house with a camelback addition.

Figure 10. Examples of the Greek Revival style found in New Orlean's Graden District.

Figure 11. The Figure to the left exemplifies the Italianate style in a camelback shotgun house while the image on the left is a detail of a parapet, also characteristic of the Italianate style.

Figure 12. Examples of the Eastlake style found in the Garden District of New Orleans.

Figure 13.Examples of the Bracket Style found in the French Quarter of New Orleans (left) and in the Garden District (right).

Figure 14. Detailed view of the brackets supporting the roof overhang of a four-bay shotgun house in the French Quarter of New Orleans as well as the quoins lining the corners of the house.

Figure 15. The Classical Revival style displayed on four-bay, double barrel shotgun houses in the Historic Spanish Town of Baton Rouge.

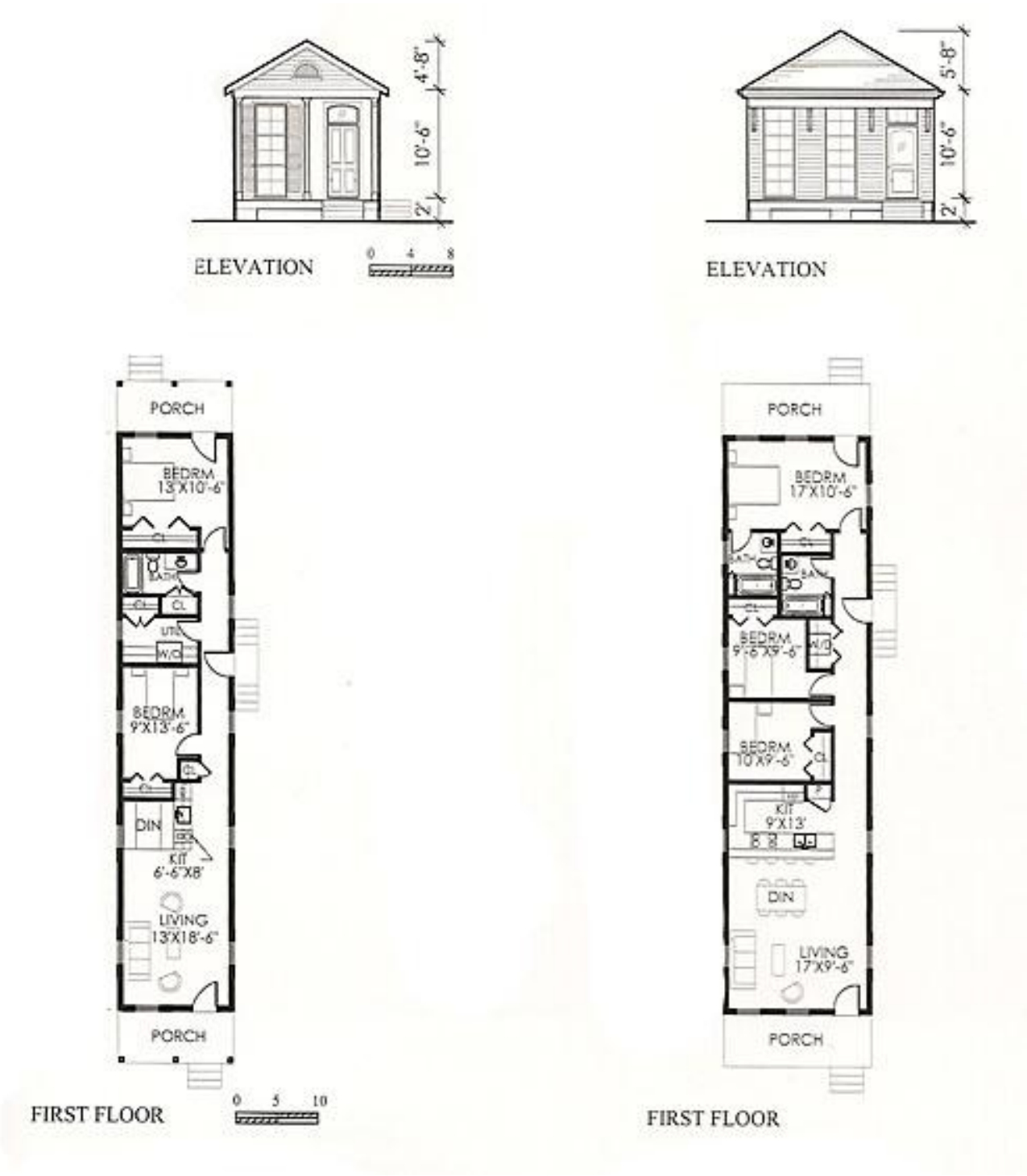

Figure 16. Examples of a standard, traditional two-bay (right) and three-bay single barrel shotgun house (left) in plan and elevation from Roulhac Toledano's *A Pattern Book of New Orleans Architecture.*

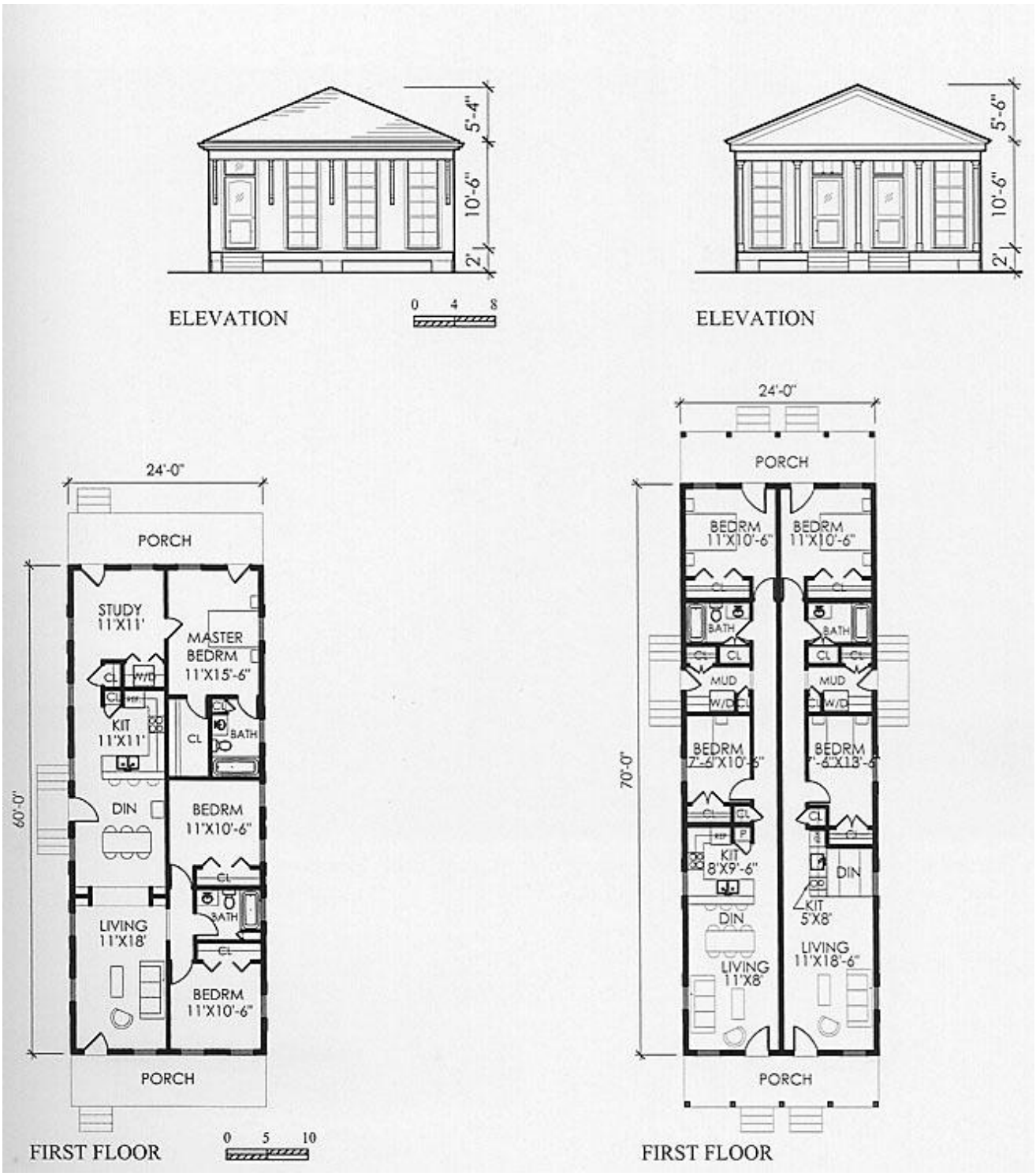

Figure 17. Examples of a standard, traditional four bay single barrel (right) and double barrel shotgun house (left) in plan and elevation from Roulhac Toledano's *A Pattern Book of New Orleans Architecture.*

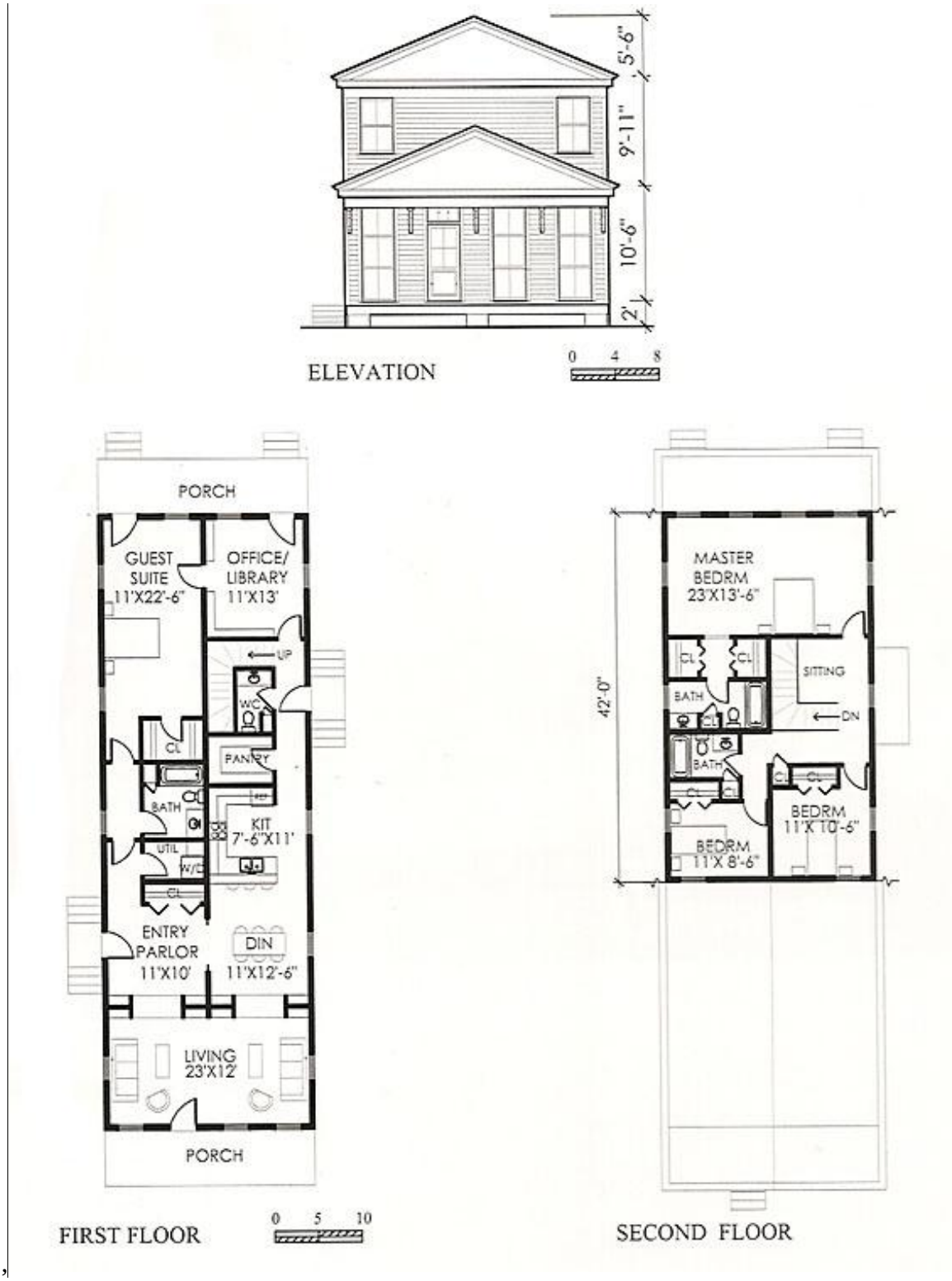

Figure 18. Example of a standard, traditional four-bay single barrel, camelback shotgun house in plan and elevation from Roulhac Toledano's *A Pattern Book of New Orleans Architecture.*

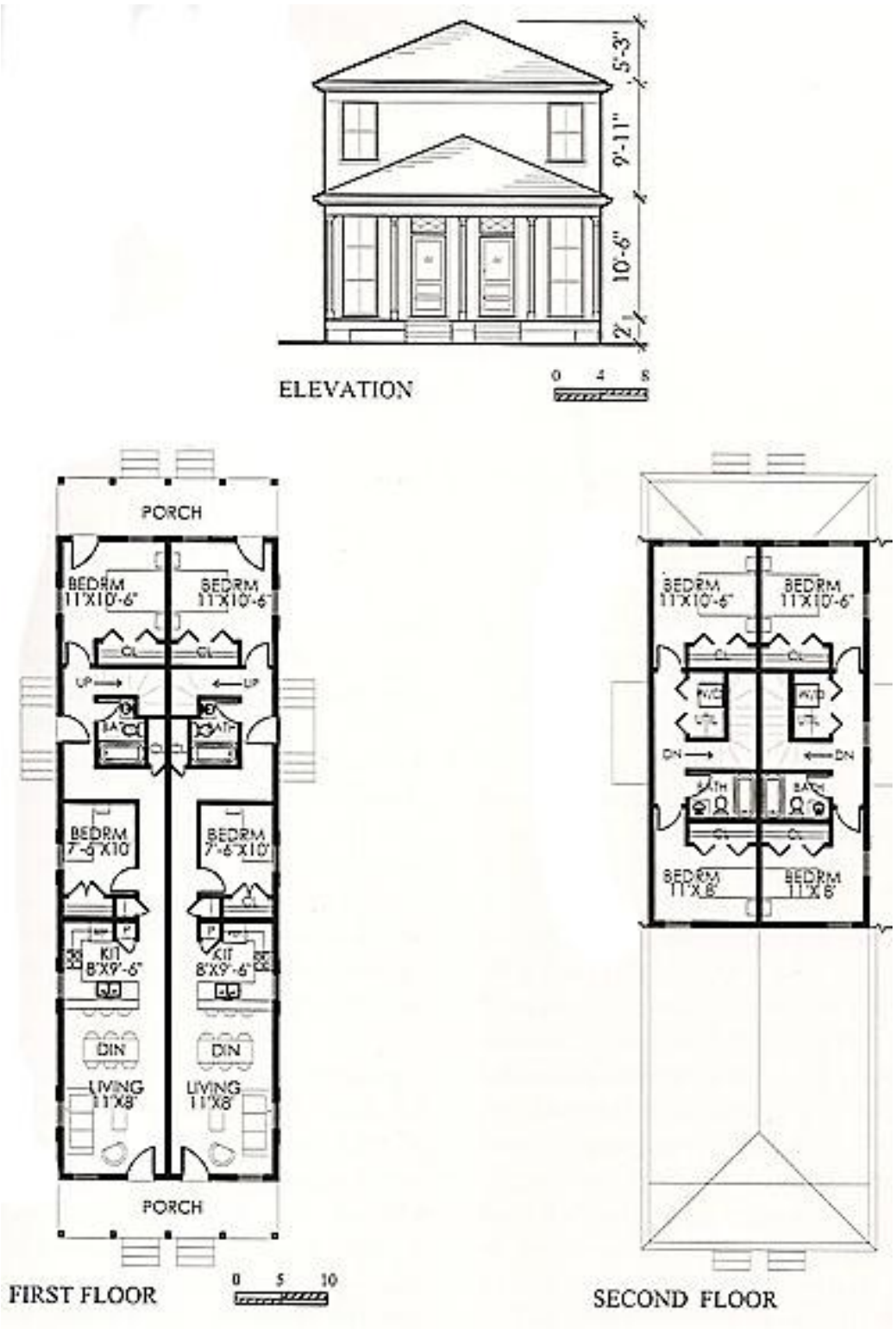

Figure 19. Example of a standard, traditional four-bay, double barrel, camelback shotgun house in plan and elevation from Roulhac Toledano's *A Pattern Book of New Orleans Architecture.*

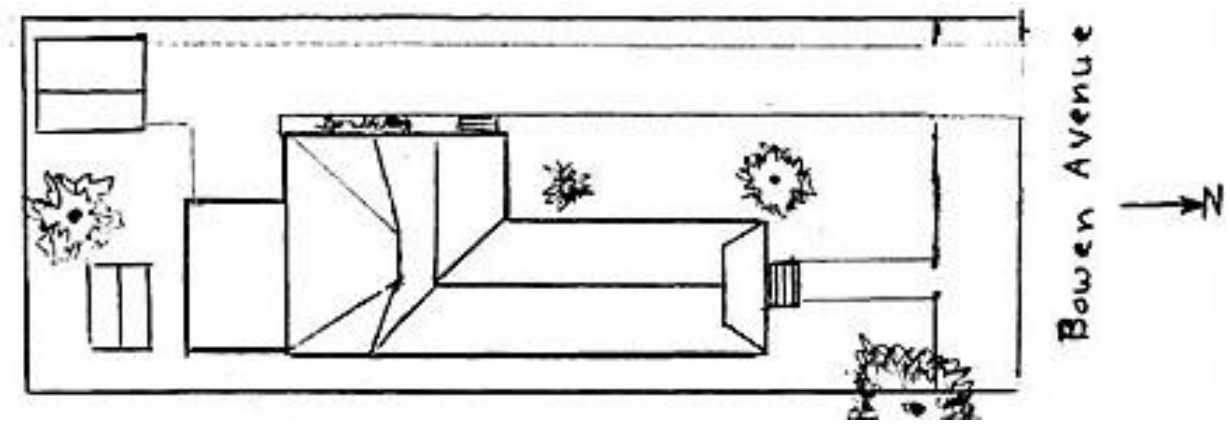

Image 20. An aerial sketch of an early 20th century shotgun house exhibiting an L-shaped plan in Ocean Springs, Mississippi.

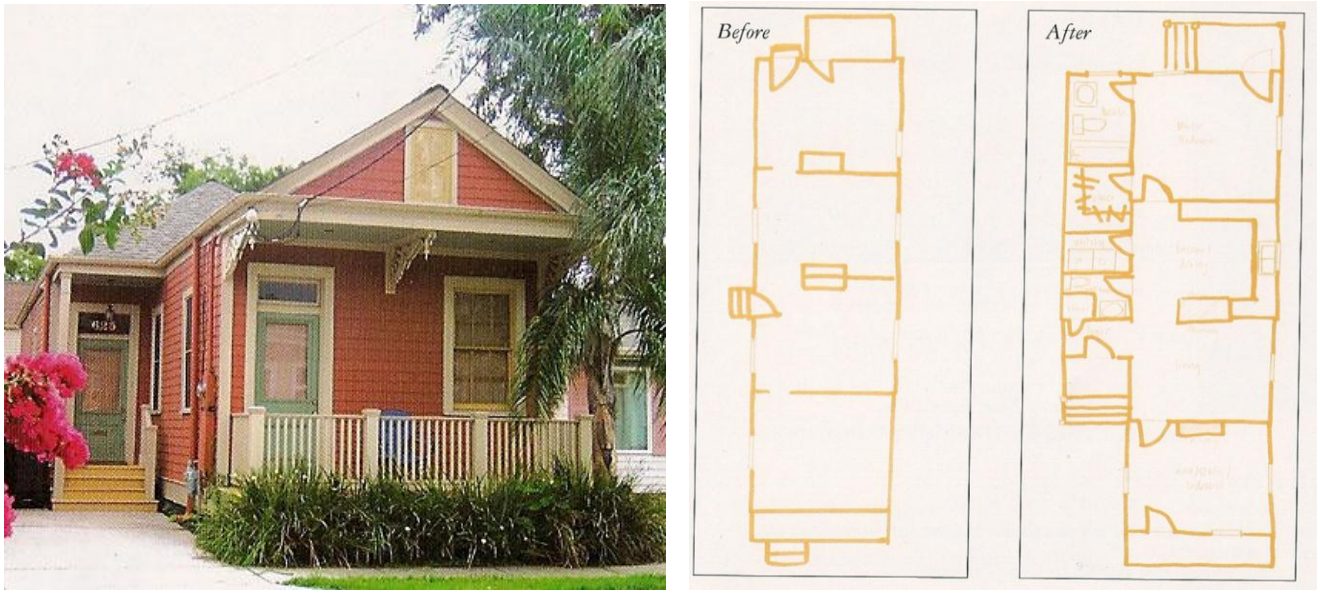

Image 21. A shotgun house with a recessed entry added to the house after a remodel as seen in the before and after plans.

Image 22. A full two-story rendition of the shotgun house both with three- and four-bays in the Garden District of New Orleans.

CHAPTER THREE: THE MODERN ITERATION OF THE AMERICAN SHOTGUN HOUSE

The contemporary shotgun house is one that has been constructed in the 21st century and while modern in material and construction, the contemporary version of the house retains qualities of the traditional shotgun that are key to making it both a cultural and architectural staple. The contemporary iteration of the house emerged due to a variety of reasons including changes in preferred style as well as the desire to live in a house that is both environmentally and economically sustainable. Modern amenities such as the air conditioning unit as well as materials for the roof and walls that are better insulated have eliminated the need for designing the shotgun house with cross ventilation in mind. While these technological advancements have reduced the need for architectural responses to climate to be imbedded into the house, many contemporary shotgun houses still hold onto the forms created by traditional, vernacular shotgun architecture. Throughout the evolution of the shotgun house, the slender, rectangular form has remained intact while stylistic features have changed. The long, narrow form of the house is the surviving feature of the home that is rooted in the typology regardless of era, as seen through the analysis of the Shot-Trot House, FLOAT House and Kiwi House, all considered to be modern iterations of the shotgun typology.

SHOT-TROT (KAPLAN HOUSE)

Houston architect Brett Zamore has a long history with the shotgun typology beginning with his renovation of a shotgun house in Houston's Fifth Ward as a graduate student at Rice University. Zamore believed that the shotgun house was elegant and provided an "excellent

template for the small home."[108] The house was designed for journalist and client David Kaplan, who had a fondness for the shotgun house. With Zamore's awareness of the architectural past of the area, the resulting design was a fusion of two of the most successful housing types in the southern United States: the shotgun house and the dog-trot. The Shot-Trot house, or Kaplan House as it is also referred to, sits on two long and narrow lots with a footprint running 16 by 80 feet that is directly inspired by the dimensions of the shotgun (Figure 23). The dog trot portion of the home is most clearly seen in the center where two large barn doors slide open to create a central breezeway which allows the house to cool itself and have maximum airflow (Figure 24).[109] Ventilation played a key role in Zamore's design. Considering Houston's climate, the architect wanted to ensure that the homeowner did not have to rely on the constant use of air-conditioning. To achieve this, Zamore fused two vernacular housing types together, the shotgun house and the dog trot, to maximize their features that were conducive to air flow.[110]

Like its neighbors, the house sits on a series of beams and drilled priers 30 inches off the ground in order to provide circulation of air throughout the house as well as protection from flood waters. Much like the exterior of the traditional shotgun house which also took into consideration the possibility of harsh weather, the exterior of the Shot-Trot is clad in Hardiplank siding which plays a key role in the resistance to humidity as well as termites (Figure 25). Airflow was a major factor in the design of the Kaplan House as evident through the use of walls that were designed to allow for air to flow from the base to the eves of the structure through a

[108] Brett Zamore, "Cottage Industry," *Metropolis*, http://www.zamorehomes.com/PDF/zamore_metropolis.pdf (accessed November 4, 2012).
[109] Sam Grawe, "The Lowest Utility Bill on the Block," *Dwell*, http://www.brettzamoredesign.com/publication_images/zamore_13.pdf (accessed November 2, 2012), 72.

[110] Grawe, "The Lowest Utility Bill on the Block," 74.

gap between the insulation materials.[111] Zamore designed the Shot-Trot with the mindset that it would become a kit house which could be replicated. Prefabricated elements from local sources were used to minimize the amount of time spent on the project as well as consolidate the use of materials. The house was based on an eight-foot grid which worked well with standard cuts of woods which helped keeps costs low and customizing of the materials to a minimum. The final cost of the house averaged out to be less than $100.00 per square foot.[112]

Due to his extensive work with the typology, Zamore has found the shotgun house to hold "a wealth of virtues" seeing as the narrow form of the house is community-minded and lends itself to being a social structure built in close proximity to neighboring houses.[113] The traditional shotgun house is already an energy efficient design with its concrete piers that allow for cool winds to pass below the structure as well as possessing aligned front and back doors that lend themselves to cross-ventilation through the house. The architect's intentions regarding the Shot-Trot house were to launch a web-based company offering shotgun inspired cottages ranging in both price and square footage. Zamore believes that the house, which is efficient in terms of shipping, building and maintenance, is made for the "carbon-crisis world."[114] With the Shot-Trot house and other houses that he markets as kit-homes, Zamore aims to offer an innovative, ready-to-assemble house with readily accessible materials that provide "high-design, affordability, customization and energy efficiency."[115] The end result is a unique and modern home.

[111] Ibid, 74.
[112] Ibid, 74.
[113] Zamore, "Cottage Industry."
[114] Ibid.
[115] Zamore Homes LLC., "Zamore Homes," http://www.zamorehomes.com/main.html (accessed November 13, 2012).

While the Shot-Trot house is very modern in design, it still retains some characteristics associated with the traditional shotgun typology. The plan most clearly resembles a single barrel, two-bay shotgun house as there is not a side hall present as would be the case in a three-bay iteration and each room is entered by going through another (Figure 26). The only place in the house where this is not the case is towards the rear where a second bedroom is accessed via a small hallway. The layout of the rooms progress from public to private space where the public spaces like the kitchen and living room face the street where the bedrooms are located at the rear of the house to achieve a greater level of privacy (Figure 26). One way in which the house distinguishes itself from a traditional shotgun is through the façade where the bays are not full length or of equal widths separated by columns or spindles thereby dividing the façade into equal sections as seen in the shotgun houses of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Figure 27). Despite this break from the traditional typology, the proportions established by the Shot-Trot are carefully measured to create a long and narrow form consistent with traditional shotgun houses. Like a traditional shotgun house, the short end of the house faces the street with the length of the home stretching far back into the site. The perimeter of the house measures 20 feet by 80 feet where the width is exactly one fourth of the length of the house. These proportions recall those of the traditional typology which allowed for the narrow form of the house to be maintained (Figure 28). The porch continues to play a key role in facilitating the community culture of the shotgun house in the Shot-Trot house (Figure 23). This is due to the fact that the house does not lie in an area prone to flooding or storms like both the traditional and modern shotgun houses that are found in New Orleans. Compared with the often times elaborate styles adorned by shotgun houses such as the Bracket Style or the Classical Revival style, the Shot-Trot house is less ornamental. The façade is white but accented with a pop of brilliant green to accent the entry

way of the house with doors and windows that are not articulated with ornate details (Figure 5). The roofline also differs from those that were commonly used on shotgun houses in that the roof is totally gabled, no longer displaying the hipped form (Figure 23).

FLOAT HOUSE

According to Morphosis Architects, the FLOAT house is the first floating house permitted in the United States (Figure 29). It is a new kind of residential architecture that is able to sustain both its own water and power needs as well as withstand floodwaters the capacity of which were seen by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.[116] While the house is not meant to be lived in during a hurricane, the design aims to minimize damage to the home and the property in the case of severe weather. Affordability is also a major factor driving the design of the house as it is a prototype which takes on the idea of mass-producing low-income housing that responds to both culture and climate.[117]

The FLOAT house is located in the Ninth Ward of New Orleans, LA and respects both the culture and context that is so exclusive to the city. Morphosis Architects believe that the FLOAT house stems from the native shotgun house typology found throughout New Orleans. Like a traditional shotgun, the FLOAT house sits on a raised base but it is modified and referred to as a "chassis" which holds all mechanical, electrical, plumbing and sustainable systems (Figure 30). One of the most unique and innovative features of the chassis is that it allows the house to float in high floodwaters and is designed to be adapted to a variety of housing configurations.[118] The house is considered to be a modern rendition of the shotgun typology with a very small 945 square-foot footprint that is elevated off the ground. All of the rooms in

[116] Morphosis Architects Inc., "FLOAT House-Morphomedia-Morphosis Architects," http://morphopedia.com/projects/float-house (accessed November 4, 2012).
[117] Morphosis, "FLOAT House-Morphomedia-Morphosis Architects."
[118] Idib.

the plan align end-to end creating a long and narrow floor plan consistent with the plans of traditional shotgun typologies (Figure 31). The FLOAT House, however, is a clear departure from the shotgun house as it can become a raft during the event of a severe storm where the structure can rise 12 feet up two tall guideposts without displacement or destruction. [119]

The FLOAT house was developed to meet the needs of the families living in the Ninth Ward of New Orleans and became a prototype for prefabricated, affordable housing that could be used to accommodate areas that are prone to flooding. The house was assembled on-site using local labor as well as conventional construction techniques. The chassis came prefabricated from the factory as did all of the panelized walls, interior finishes, windows and kit-of parts roof. These features lend themselves to an efficient approach where modern mass-production meets traditional site construction and results in a low-cost, high-quality house.[120] Other sustainable factors include roof-mounted solar and solar electric storage located underneath the house as well as a rainwater collection system and a geothermal ground source heat pump that reduces the need for the use of air conditioning. [121]

The architects at Morphosis used the FLOAT House to address global climate change which is creating harsh floods among other natural disasters. The house acts as a sustainable model for living that adapts to areas prone to floods by confronting the issue in a way that was inspired by the vernacular architecture of the shotgun house. [122] The house sits on a 4-foot base as opposed to being permanently raised ten feet off the ground or on higher stilts which allows for the house to rise only in instances of severe floods. The chassis does not infringe on the

[119] Sarah Rich, "Morphosis FLOAT House for NOLA," *Dwell*, http://www.dwell.com/articles/morphosis-float-house-for-nola.html (accesed November 4, 2012).
[120] Morphosis, "FLOAT House-Morphomedia-Morphosis Architects."
[121] Rich, "Morphosis FLOAT House for NOLA."
[122] Morphosis, "FLOAT House-Morphomedia-Morphosis Architects."

traditional front porch of the shotgun house and thereby preserves the porch culture that is so vital to the community.

The FLOAT House, like the Shot-Trot, has qualities that are both modern as well as those that have remained consistent in the design from the early shotgun houses of the 19th and 20th centuries. The FLOAT House doesn't display its bays in the same manner as the traditional, four-bay shot gun house however, three panels of even widths and equal measurements on the front façade as well as a recessed entryway that is the same width as the panels is reminiscent of a traditional four-bay façade of a shotgun (Figure 32). The plan is very similar to a single barrel, three-bay housing type where a side hall is present all along the length of the house which is used to access each room (Figure 31). The layout of the rooms is also traditional in nature as the rooms progress from public space to the most private spaces, the master bedroom (Figure 31). A front porch is elevated off the street which facilitates open communication as well as engagement with the community (Figure 29). The narrow form of the building is created using proportions that allow for the width of the home to make up roughly one fifth of the length of the house. As with the traditional shotgun house, the short side of the FLOAT house faces the street with the length expanding back into the property to maximize the narrow lot size (Figure 33). The style of the exterior is traditional in the sense that vibrant colors were used to personalize the house and set it apart from its neighbors. The FLOAT house is very modern with its use of prefabricated panels, a jagged roof line that zig-zags across the top of the house as well the use of small windows and an abstract, decorative railing, all of which were elements not present in the construction of the traditional shotgun house (Figure 29).

KIWI HOUSE

The design/build firm Plusone Design and Construction is responsible for the Kiwi House in Baton Rouge, LA, which focused on replacing the home of a couple whose house had sustained damages resulting from Hurricane Katrina. The end result was an affordable house that took a fresh, modern approach to a traditional and local model, the shotgun (Figure 34). According to architect David Baird, the house is "an interpretation of a shotgun house, which is a very efficient vernacular typology."[123] The plan of the house puts public space such as the kitchen and the living room in the front of the home with a master bedroom in the rear (Figure 35). The wooden privacy screen on the side of the house not only provides shade along the side porch but is conducive to allowing a breeze to flow through.[124]

The Kiwi House was constructed with both site limitations and restricted finances in mind. The house gets its name from the rough exterior and cool, open interior. The house is a modern interpretation of the shotgun house built for around $98 per square foot and is consistent with the traditional imagery of the neighborhood. Three principles guided the construction and design of the house including a response to the site that facilitates an existing sense of community, minimizing consumption and waste as well as being mindful of natural resources as well as planning for efficiency of energy use and reduction of energy loss.

The Kiwi House is 1195 square feet with three bedrooms and two baths with an additionally 500 square feet reserved for the covered porches. The master bedroom opens onto the backyard with a private porch designating the private portion of the house with a living and kitchen occupying the front, public part of the house. A full glass façade further connects the

[123] Bruce D. Snider, "Kiwi House, Baton Rouge, LA. Custom Home / Less Than 3,000 SquareFeet," *Builder*, http://www.origin.builderonline.com/custom-homes/kiwi-housebaton-rouge-la.aspx (accessed Novermber 4, 2012).
[124] Brce D. Snider, "Kiwi House, Baton Rouge, LA. Custom Home / Less Than 3,000 SquareFeet," *Builder.*

house to the surrounding community and front porch culture (Figure 36). These two spaces are divided by laundry and storage rooms at the center of the house. Co-owner of Plusone Design and Construction David Baird feels that

> "Facilitating community is a vital part of architecture. The way a building is designed can encourage or inhibit this sense of community. The way we configured the porches and screen walls provides the Mitchell's with the privacy and security they need, while at the same time maintaining an openness to the street and connection with their neighbors."[125]

For Plusone, upholding a sense of community was of equal importance to designing with the environment in mind. By being conscious of the site as well as the materials going into the house, the architects were able to build a space which utilized recyclable materials such as a metal riglet system which eliminated the need for excessive amounts of wood for crown molding and baseboards. Energy efficiency determined the layout of the house as well as the placement of the porches and windows in a way that avoided thermal heat transfer by opening the house to the east. Overhangs above the windows prevent direct sunlight. Cross ventilation has been achieved through the use of small upper windows mounted in large rooms throughout the house without losing privacy (Figure 14). The Kiwi House was built on a concrete slab thereby preventing large temperature swings by creating a larger thermal mass as opposed to the traditional pier and beam method. The roof has subtle pitch that shelters the high ceilings of the interior and was constructed with the intentions of reducing air mass and its subsequent heating and cooling requirements (Figure 34).[126]

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[125] CORNERSTONE, "The Shotgun Reinvented An Affordable Solution for Hurricane Survivors," *Southern Design & Building*, http://www.southerndesignandbuilding.org/item/152-the-shotgun-reinvented-an-affordable-solution-for-hurricane-survivors (accessed November 4, 2012).
[126] CORNERSTONE, "The Shotgun Reinvented An Affordable Solution for Hurricane Survivors."

The façade of the Kiwi House has five bays; three of the bays are identical with long windows on the bottom portion of the façade and a smaller window above, the fourth bay contains only the small window seen in the previous three bays, also of equal width, and the fifth bay is the open passageway that leads to the entry of the house (Figure 36). A front porch is present on the Kiwi House in an effort to establish a sense of community between the house and the surrounding occupants though it is not elevated as seen in many traditional homes (Figure 37). The layout of the plan, like a traditional shotgun house, puts public areas towards the front of the house while the private areas such as the bedrooms, are concealed from public view at the rear of the property. A single hallway is used throughout the Kiwi House to enter into all other rooms in a manner like that of a single barrel, triple-bay shotgun house despite the modern version having more than three bays (Figure 35). The width of the house is approximately one fourth of the length of the house which allows the house to maintain its long and narrow form that is consistent throughout all examples of the shotgun house in both modern as well as traditional iterations (Figure 38). The style of the Kiwi House displays little ornament, common for modern houses. The roofline is slightly slanted making it very different from the traditional hip roof used in shotguns of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The façade is fairly plain but uses the texture of the wooden screen wall as well as the bright green color on the front of the house to distinguish it as a unique structure despite the lack of ornate detail seen in traditional styles like Italianate and Eastlake (Figure 37).

CONCLUSION

Each of these houses utilizes different aspects of the traditional shotgun house in forming a contemporary housing typology. While the styles vary from house to house, two formal architectural elements are always present, the porch and the narrow form. The porch remains an

important feature of the housing type due to its role as an enabler of community gathering and interconnectedness between people and their neighbors. The narrow form of the house embodies the essence of the shotgun house and not only accommodates small lots but allows for a smaller environmental impact to be made on the land, a quality that architects have consciously incorporated into their design since the 1980s. The slender housing type, one dictated by vernacular qualities, remains a practical typology as it allows for the shotgun to occupy a small area of land, reducing its impact on the environment, while being able to incorporate all aspects of a house necessary in making a home. Therefore, the "long house", the embodiment of the proportions and form relative to the shotgun, reestablishes its presence in the world of modern architecture as a form derived from the traditional American shotgun typology.

Urban density and how the shotgun house interacts with the surrounding houses in the area plays an important role in both the contemporary and traditional shotgun typologies. For example, the shotgun houses found in the Spanish Town Historic district of downtown Baton Rouge demonstrate how close together the houses were situated on their lots, a common situation throughout Louisiana (Figure 39). In all neighborhoods where the shotgun house was found in large numbers, the lot sizes tend to be small in width but long in depth with the house taking up the majority of the lot (Figure 40). Because of this, the houses are very close together and in many cases have less than two feet between the neighboring households (Figure 41). Both the Kiwi House and the FLOAT House are in neighborhoods with small lot sizes surrounded by neighboring houses (Figures 42 and 43). Although these houses have more space between one another than the traditional shogun houses found throughout New Orleans, the use of the typology in a variety of areas demonstrates their practicality as a housing typology best suited for densely populated regions and cities. The endurance of the vernacular typology used in an

aesthetic manner is further illustrated by the Cottages of Baton Rouge, a new living community exclusively set aside for college students, which features floor plans ranging from one to five bedroom units. The one bedroom cottage closely resembles the traditional two-bay, single shotgun house (Figure 44). The influence is obvious as seen in the façade as well as form of the house. The house is located in a very dense urban environment (Figure 45). The floor plan of the house is typical of the two-bay shotgun in that one must walk through one room to reach another but the house is no more than two rooms deep, which is not consistent with the traditional plan of the shotgun house (Figure 46). A front porch is included on every house in the gated community which adds to the essence of the shotgun house, which is famous for its front porch as means for socializing with neighbors (Figure 45).

It was the shotgun as a vernacular housing type that paved the way for many features to be added and utilized in order to maximize the efficiency of the dwelling. The fact that many vernacular, architectural attributes continue to be incorporated into modern designs, such as the desire to exploit air flow through design despite technological innovations, illustrates how effective the house is as a unit that can be self-sufficient and has been for over 150 years.

Figure 23. Brett Zamore's Shot-Trot or Kaplan House as seen from the front in Houston, TX.

Figure 24. Interior view of the Shot-Trot house showcasing the central breezeway or dog-trot element.

Figure 25. Detailed view of the materials used to clad the exterior of the Shot-Trot House.

• 1,250 sf perimeter: 20'x80'

• 2 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths

1 kitchen 2 dining 3 living 4 bedroom 5 bath 6 fireplace 7 w/d 8 attic access 9 porch

vaulted ceiling

0 4 8

Figure 26. Plan view of the Shot-Trot house.

Figure 27. View of the front façade of the Shot-Trot house with front porch.

Figure 28. Side elevation of the Shot-Trot house.

Figure 29. The FLOAT House by Morphosis Architects in the Ninth Ward of New Orleans, LA.

Figure 30. View of the front façade of the FLOAT House. Note the “chassis” or bottom portion of the house that elevates in the case of severe floods.

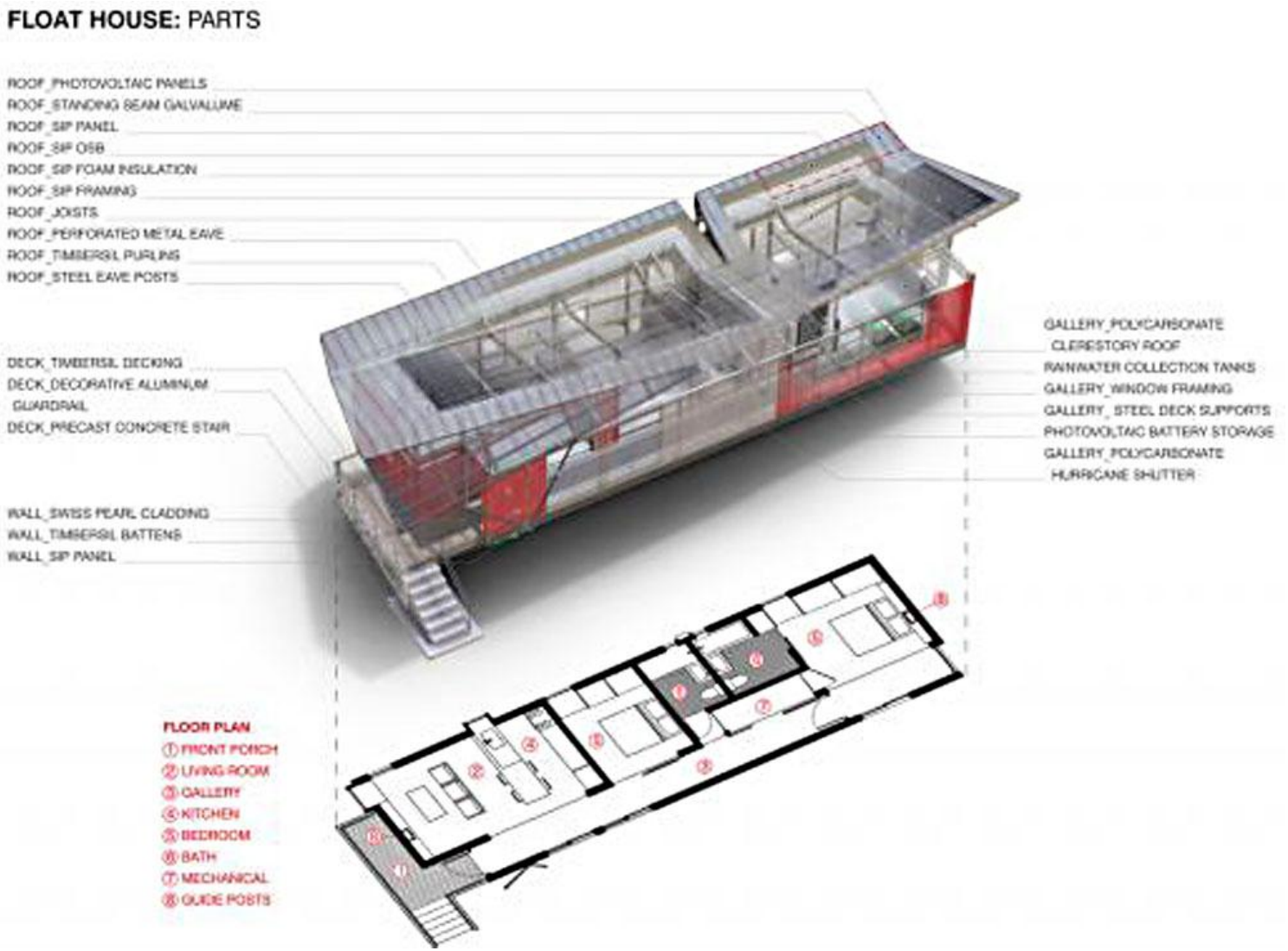

Figure 31. Plan view and digital model of the FLOAT House.

Figure 32. Front façade of the FLOAT House, note the bays to articulate and divide the façade.

Figure 33. Side elevation of the FLOAT house and view of the side of the porch critical for a close, community-oriented lifestyle.

Figure 34. Plusone Design and Constructions's Kiwi House in Baton Rouge, LA.

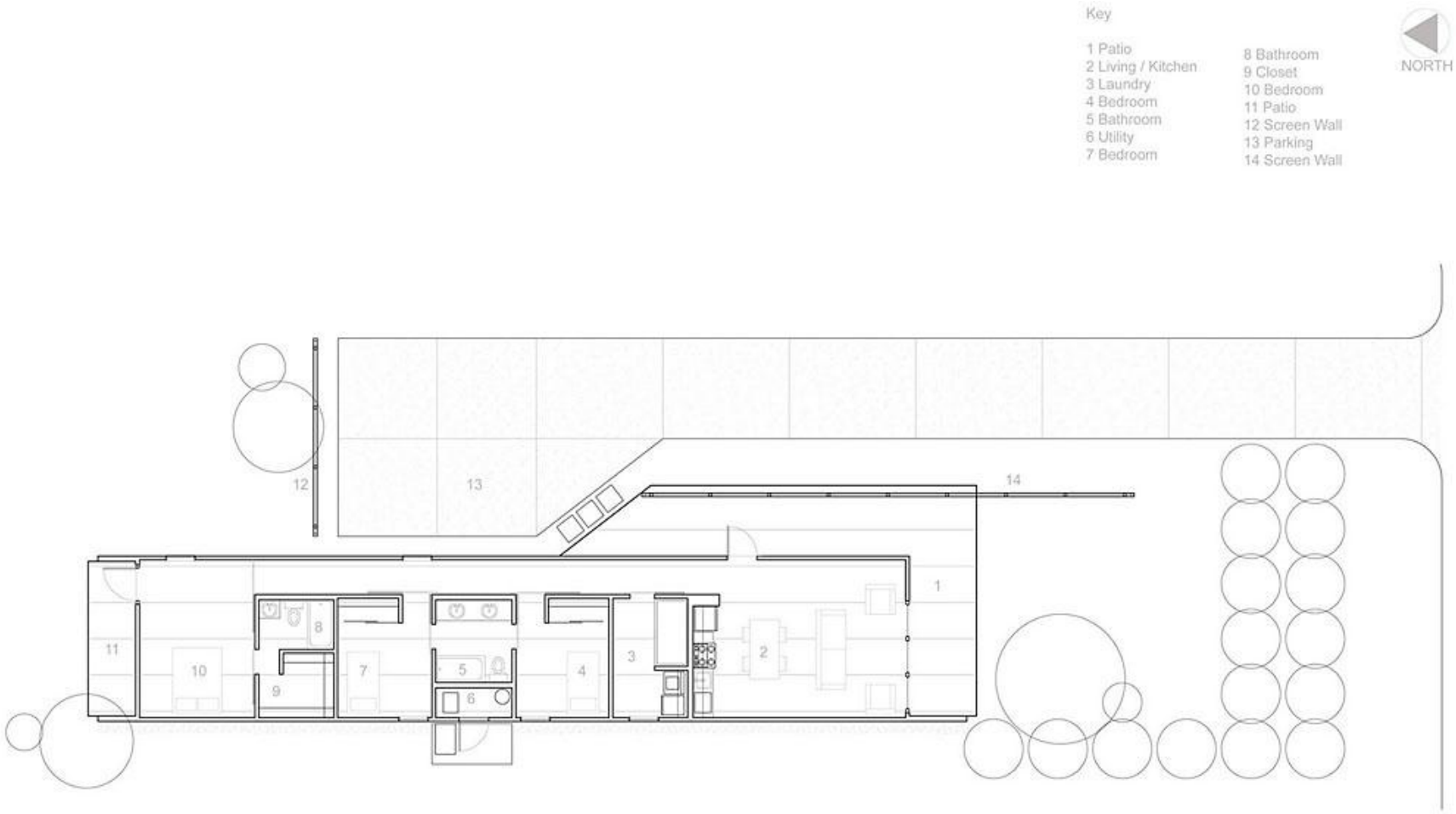

Figure 35. Plan view of the Kiwi House.

Figure 36. Front façade of the Kiwi House with an emphasis on the bays and modern style.

Figure 37. The porch of the Kiwi House sits on street level and is surrounding by a screen wall and a small overhang provided by the roof.

Figure 38. Both images above demonstrate the long and narrow form of the Kiwi House.

Figure 39. Example of the density of the shotgun houses found within the Historic Spanish Town District of Baton, Rouge, LA.

Figure 40. Shotgun houses in the French Quarter of New Orleans, LA are built in close proximity to one another and take up the entire lot.

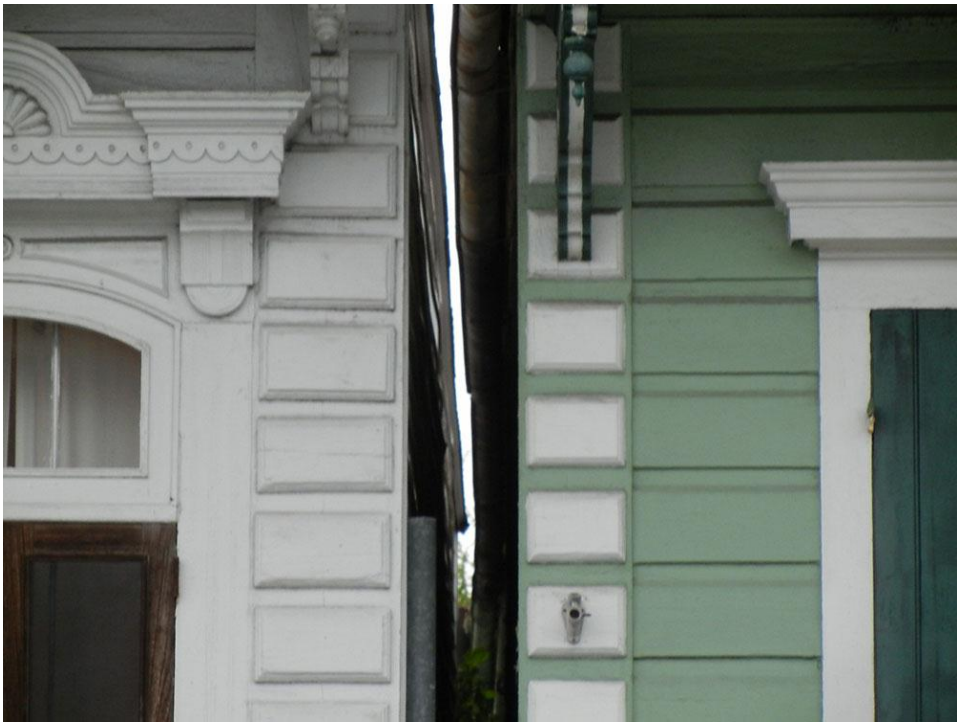

Figure 41. Detail of the close proximity in which shotgun houses are built next to their neighbors.

Figure 42. Street view of the FLOAT House in New Orleans' Ninth Ward emphasizing the dense environment in which the contemporary shotgun house is built.

Figure 43. Street view of the Kiwi House in Baton Rouge, LA demonstrating the dense environment in which the contemporary shotgun house is built.

Figure 44. A typical one bedroom dwelling found at the Cottages of Baton Rouge.

Figure 45. The houses within the Cottages at Baton Rouge all have front porches and are in close proximity to one another which is also seen in the case of shotgun houses where the porch culture thrives especially in dense, urban environments.

Figure 46. Plan view of a one bedroom “cottage” located at the Cottages of Baton Rouge.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE ENDURING PRESENCE OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

"All forms of vernacular architecture are built to meet specific needs, accommodating the values, economies and ways of living of the cultures that produce them." – Paul Oliver

Vernacular architecture is a conceptual invention of the 19th century with etymological and epistemological limitations.[127] Etymologically, vernacular is that which is native or unique to a specific place, constructed without the need for imported components and processes, and it is likely that those who built the architecture are the people that reside in it. These particular features of vernacular architecture have been reworked to accommodate the buildings of the 21st century where tradition and culture are less rooted in place but instead rely heavily on information. Epistemologically, the meaning of vernacular architecture has also changed in order to be relevant for a modern era. According to Nezar AlSayyad, vernacular architecture is the most modern of the modern.[128] The gradual changes that occur over a long period of time regarding vernacular structures are a result of geographic or economic limitations that cannot be overcome by the regional, local population. Paul Oliver argues that traditional building no longer exists but embodies certain vernacular traditions. Oliver feels that it is important to focus on the practice of transmission as a means of understanding and maintaining the vernacular. However, it is important to note that the practices regarding transmission have changed due to technological advancement and increased communication.[129]

[127] Lindsay Asquith, and Marcel Vellinga, Vernacular Architecture in the Twenty-First Century- Theory, education and practice, (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2006), xvii.
[128] Asquith, Vernacular Architecture in the Twenty-First Century- Theory, education and practice, xvii.
[129]Ibid, xviii.

REVITALIZING THE VERNACULAR

Architects during the late nineteenth century found a "pure and natural means of expression" in the vernacular. Many designers were allured to this type of building as it was not corrupted by the historic styles of the past and relied on an ethnic, folk and/or regionalist approach to design. The originality and pure qualities that were possessed by vernacular architecture became the roots for the development of a modern vocabulary.[130] Designers relied on inspiration from vernacular architecture to provide their designs with a sense of originality that was believed to be required in order to better serve a modern society.[131] The vernacular inspired both architects and designers to discover ways to connect architecture to external factors within society, an issue that classicism failed to consider.[132]

Vernacular architecture became a source for the highly successful English Arts and Crafts Movement at the turn of the century which emphasized functional, utilitarian forms as opposed to spaces that focused on elaborate embellishments.[133] Designer William Morris believed that an 1850s vernacular landscape provided English architects with the inspiration to use regional, natural materials in a functional manner. Ivy was used on the exterior of houses to offer an extra layer of insulation for the home which served its purpose just as well as modern, industrial materials. Charles F.A. Voysey's residential projects relied heavily on vernacular traditions regarding form and function as opposed to those who focused on academic teachings which emphasized complex articulation and ornamentation of space.[134] The minimal details and clear forms that Voysey drew upon from early vernacular structures later became the framework for

[130] Goodstein-Murphree, Ethel. "The Vernacular in the Service of the Modern I." August 28, 2012.
[131] Goodstein-Murphree, Ethel. "The Vernacular in the Service of the Modern I." August 28, 2012.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.

defining a new, modern architecture. Charles Mackintosh, an architect from Scotland, was also a proponent of incorporating vernacular elements into his designs in addition to modern ideas concerning spatial articulation. His Hill House in Helensburg, Scotland combined modern notions of space such as generous lighting and an open layout with more traditional, vernacular forms including simple tower-chimneys and round turrets.[135] The cohesive composition of planar walls pushed the Hill House in a modern direction all the while maintaining its regional roots in the form of roughcast walls and a slate roof.

During the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries, the vernacular acted as a model that architects turned to as a departure point for simple, functional and practical designs. Later on, Hermann Muthesius, German architect and Bauhaus pioneer, believed that the future of architecture would root itself in a new vernacular inspired not by natural, regional elements but by "the developments of modern, industrial production."[136] The clear forms, desire to depart from heavily ornamented space and reliance on origins and regional materials provided the framework for a modern era which also expanded on characteristics embedded in the vernacular. In Great Britain during the 1970s, a shift occurred in which people became more interested in rehabilitating old buildings as opposed to building new structures, and kick started the beginnings of the environmental/green movement.[137]

Vernacular architecture revolves around the intentions of the architects themselves. Parallels can be drawn between architects of the Arts and Crafts movement and those who practice vernacular modernism. Many people believed in a similar philosophy as was practiced by Gothic revivalist Augustus Pugin who sought to define his work by using only what was truly

[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Vicky Richardson, New Vernacular Architecture, (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 2001), 6.

English as opposed to foreign styles and techniques. For Pugin, this style was Gothic, and like so many architects who value vernacular design today, he went against current trends to utilize local traditions and materials.[138] During the late 1880s, architects and designers who were enthusiastic about the Arts and Crafts mentality began to embrace the notion of working in ways consistent with local traditions in order to avoid a standardization of building typologies in the age of the machine.[139]

In the United States, a similar mentality was spreading quickly as evident through the establishment of and ideals practiced by the Chicago-based Prairie School. The Prairie School emphasized the importance of a solid building, craftsmanship and the limited use of ornament much like the practitioners involved in the English Arts and Crafts movement. Promoter of the school and architect Frank Lloyd Wright wanted to incorporate the use of modern technologies into the creation of his time-respectful architecture.[140] His architecture and mentality became popular to the extent that several other architects nationwide adopted many of Wright's attitudes towards design and implemented them in their own projects.

In a modern age, architecture does not have to look vernacular in order for it to be inspired by it. Architect Caruso St. John believes that "'the vernacular' is not about appearance but about presence. It is a physical artifact which contains within itself the continuously evolving social and technological situation in which it was built."[141] In recent years, architects have turned to a variety of factors and features to inspire their work which include both vernacular forms and functions. Focusing on three residential projects by architects Fay Jones (1921-2004), Samuel Mockbee (1944-2001) and his partner Coleman Coker as well as Marlon Blackwell, it is clear

[138] Vicky Richardson, New Vernacular Architecture, 7.
[139] Ibid, 10.
[140] Ibid, 14.
[141] Ibid, 19.

that vernacular continues to be a prominent and guiding force in the architectural endeavors of a modern generation of architects.

THE ROY REED HOUSE

The Roy and Norma Reed House was designed by E. Fay Jones on a small farm in Hogeye, Arkansas (Figure 47). The Reed House, completed in 1983, allowed Jones to expand his application of principles pertaining to organic architecture and embrace elements of both man-made and natural settings.[142] The simplicity of the house as well as the use of familiar vernacular forms helped to distinguish this property from other residential projects that Jones had designed. The design of this house contains many forward, contemporary ideas although it has roots in the vernacular as it was inspired by the classic American barn.[143] The house fits seamlessly into the wooded landscape with its native fieldstone foundation wall and use of wood siding (Figure 48). The use of very specific and native materials was not an accident; Jones says that he wanted to "relate the house to the site in a symbiotic way, in some very natural, belonging sense."

Journalist Roy Reed solicited the architectural expertise of Jones "because [he] liked the homey quality of his houses, his use of so much stone and wood. Fay's houses are designed for the hills; they seem to fit in and blend with the mountains."[144] Jones agreed to design the Reed House despite a limited budget where he worked on creating a small, site-sensitive, energy-efficient house. These programmatic constraints allowed Jones to think more innovatively in order to create something spectacular out of something seemingly small and limited.

[142] Cheryl Nichols and Helen Barry, "The Arkansas Designs of E. Fay Jones 1956-1997." Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, http://www.arkansaspreservation.com/pdf/publications/faye_jones.pdf (accessed November 13, 2012), 61.
[143] Robert Adams Ivy, Jr. The Architecture of E. Fay Jones, FAIA, (New York: The American Institute of Architects Press, 1992), 173.
[144] Cheryl Nichols and Helen Barry, "The Arkansas Designs of E. Fay Jones 1956-1997," 61.

The structure is rustic in nature but its clarity and simplicity give the house an elegant presence on the Reed's farm. Like vernacular architecture of an earlier era, Jones is careful to orient the house to take full advantage of sun and shade through the use of the existing trees, a low roofline and large windows.[145] Materials for the structure were selected based on sustainable features like permanence as well as for their natural, inherent beauty that allowed the Reed house to blend in even further into the surrounding scenery with the use of native woods like cedar and oak as well as fieldstone gathered from an adjacent pasture.[146] Consistent with the typical appearance of a barn, the Reed House is clad in wood with a shake roof and red cedar applied diagonally to the walls giving the façade a natural texture (Figure 49).[147] Jones intended for the diagonal pattern of the siding to resemble old corn cribs which were widespread in the area although the wood siding also resembles other building traditions popular in other regions of the world including northern Europe and Japan.[148]

Traditional Japanese post-and-beam construction can be seen on the outside of the house while other Japanese elements such as sliding screen doors are employed to take advantage of the breezes that come from the surrounding valley. The interior of the house is essentially one volume. The house, despite its ties with Japanese traditions, does not make the Reed House impractical in any way. Large "hayloft" windows on either end of the house are operable and can be opened to allow for air to rise throughout the high, interior volume and out the gabled ends of the structure. According to Jones, the energy efficiency of the house is "deeply embedded in the architecture" and dictates the organization of the building.[149] The house is composed of three

[145] Robert Adams Ivy, Jr. The Architecture of E. Fay Jones, FAIA, 173.
[146] "Ibid, 174.
[147] Ibid, 173.
[148] Ibid, 173.
[149] Robert Adams Ivy, Jr. The Architecture of E. Fay Jones, FAIA, 173.

levels and is carefully positioned to take advantage of cross-ventilation as well as seasonal sun control as there is an absence of both air conditioning and heating units in the residence.[150] Two ceiling fans in the main living space enhance airflow and two wood-burning stoves supply the entire house with heat. Although nothing was placed in the house simply for decorative purposes, the stove is very sculptural in essence. Jones argues that everything in the house has a function and while that may be the case, the woodwork throughout the house is very detailed and visually pleasing (Figure 50).[151] Solar heat is gathered via a large south facing window as well as through a ridge skylight that can be covered during warm seasons to reduce the heat.[152] The deep overhangs on either side of the roof are essential for providing shade to the house. The house takes vernacular inspiration from sensible, Japanese forms and pairs them with the pragmatism embodied in American culture to create an architecture of common sense and originality that surpasses both sources of inspiration.[153]

THE COOK HOUSE

Samuel Mockbee and Coleman Coker's design of the Cook House in Oxford, Mississippi incorporates a variety of elements characteristic of the vernacular, rural south (Figure 51). Inspiration for Mockbee's architecture stems from the narratives found throughout his paintings in which he believes the themes come from his subconscious. Mockbee states that these beliefs are "from the collective language of past generations" where generations to follow are given the opportunity to disregard, reinterpret or build on the past language.[154] It is the ideas of

[150] "E. Fay Jones: Roy Reed House, Hogeye, Arkansas." Architecture & Urbanism no. 7 (July 1985): 43 48. Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals, EBSCOhost (accessed November 14, 2012).
[151] "Sheltering roof over a soaring space: house in Hogeye, Arkansas." Architecture: The AIA Journal 73, no. 5 (May 1984): 294-301. Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals, EBSCOhost(accessed November 14, 2012).
[152] "E. Fay Jones: Roy Reed House, Hogeye, Arkansas."
[153] Ibid, 174.
[154] Lori Ryker, Mockbee Coker Thought and Process, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1995), 45.

reinterpretation and perpetuation that have a collective meaning and lend themselves to the creation of a new, architectural form. Coker believes that these meanings are related to authenticity as "a means by which a culture can absorb its own tradition and become mindful of the past…providing an accepting of responsibility for that tradition, while developing a real perceptual experience of the present."[155] With Mockbee and Coker's abovementioned ideas combined with the unique principles important to the Cook family, the duo was able to create a building that accommodated the needs of the Cooks in a structure that reflected the culture of the South.[156]

The Cook House is the result of these sets of beliefs which draws both on personal vision as well as the reinterpretation of traditions and is an active participant in its cultural context. According to the architect, the house evokes a sense of protection while the distinctive form is conceived from trailer houses along with their additions, as they are prevalent dwellings found throughout the rural South. Mockbee and Coker take the trailer home, a form that is representative of nomadic American culture, and give it a sense of permanence as an isolated space embedded in a rural environment (Figure 52).[157] Affordable yet modern, the trailer takes root on its site and becomes the product of various additions and modifications in an effort to personalize the dwelling and make it a practical space for living (Figure 53). The temporary intentions of the mobile home evolve into a structure that it meant to last a lifetime. Other scholars like Robert Ivy believe that the Cook House evokes other cultural southern symbols

[155] Lori Ryker, Mockbee Coker Thought and Process, 45.
[156] Ivy, Robert Adams. "Back road retreat: Cook House, Oxford, Mississippi, Mockbee-CokerArchitects." Architecture 81, no. 2 (February 1992): 54-59]. Avery Index to Architectural] Periodicals, EBSCOhost (accessed November 14, 2012).
[157] Ivy, Robert Adams. "Back road retreat: Cook House, Oxford, Mississippi, Mockbee-Coker Architects." 45.

such as the barn, screened porch and animal pen and that the linear composition of the site builds upon layers, suggesting the remains of an older building or industrial ruin.[158]

The house is constructed using common, durable and easily accessible materials; the roof, which covers the main structure on the 340 acre lot, is made of metal while plain, concrete blocks comprise walls in both the interior and exterior of the house (Figure 54). As would be the case with a traditional, narrow, long trailer, the house sits underneath an overhung corrugated roof.[159] Because the Cook family considered their animals and livestock to be family members, lean-to extensions along with pens, cages and aviaries were added onto the main volume using cyclone fencing to contain them.[160,161] The house embraces the outdoor environment as evident through a multitude of entrances and windows that aim to bring the outside in. Upon entry into the living room, a linear spatial progression leads individuals down a narrow hall which ends at the master bedroom. Lofted spaces above both the living room and master bedroom are used as summertime decks. The public portions of the house focus on a single exterior feature, a lily pond, which serves as a reference point distinguishing the main building from its secondary edifices.[162] The house takes full advantage of the surrounding landscape as views are directed out towards the hills. Mockbee and Coker use the vernacular as a departure point to create a dwelling that "provides a constructed experience of the built world and passes beyond its physical confines" by taking into consideration the typical, rural, Southern residence and creating a more modern form.[163] The rural elements of the house are offset by the unique design, large

[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Lori Ryker, Mockbee Coker Thought and Process, 46.
[161] "Mockbee/Coker a Oxford, Mississippi: casa con zoo." Abitare no. 337 (February 1995): 76-77. Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals, EBSCOhost (accessed November 14, 2012).
[162] Ibid, 47.
[163] Ibid, 47.

glazed living-room wall, and bold color scheme used throughout the interior spaces (Figure 55).[164] Mockbee and Coker were successful in creating a dwelling that evokes what came before it while speaking to a modern age through a unique blend of materials and forms native to the Mississippi landscape with a modern twist.

THE PORCHDOG HOUSE

The Porchdog House, part of a series of Biloxi Model Homes, is a prototype designed by architect Marlon Blackwell for the Architecture for Humanity Model Home Program (Figure 56).[165] This program aimed to provide affordable living for families whom had lost their homes in the eastern portion of Biloxi, Mississippi to Hurricane Katrina. The house is raised approximately eleven feet off the ground and, in turn, threatens the traditional streetscape and porch culture associated with the Gulf Coast area.[166] But, the phenomenon of porch culture, popular throughout New Orleans as well as along the Gulf Coast, was an important, driving factor used in making decisions relative to the design of the house. The Porchdog House goes against the grain of the traditional Gulf Coast streetscape and designs the porch such that it becomes an extension of the interior of the house as opposed to occupying a strictly exterior portion of the structure (Figure 57). Despite raising the house high off the ground which could result in a socially isolated space, the stoop at the base of the house acts as a street-level porch which ties the Porchdog down to its communal roots (Figure 58). This feature is an extremely important element in the design of the Porchdog as it continues to facilitate the porch community that is vital and engrained in the culture associated with the Gulf Coast.

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[164] "Mockbee/Coker a Oxford, Mississippi: casa con zoo."
[165] Marlon Blackwell Architect. "Porchdog House Prototype." Accessed November 13, 2012. http://www.marlonblackwell.com/work_residential_porchdog-house-prototype.html.
[166] "Porchdog House/ Marlon Blackwell Architect." ArchDaily. February 6, 2011. Accessed November 13, 2012. http://www.archdaily.com/109657/porchdog-house-marlon-blackwell-architect/

The program of the house is stacked in formation keeping the house compact in nature. The ground level of the building houses space for parking as well as an entry stair and enclosed storage unit and makes a minimal impact on the ground.[167] Raising the facility off the ground allows for the house to protect itself from damage that could be caused by a severe storm, flood or hurricane. Light is controlled via louvered shutters and serves a dual purpose as storm security due to the aluminum framed window walls on both the East and West elevations.[168]

Inspiration for the house stemmed from regional, vernacular architecture in the form of the shotgun house. The theory behind the design of the form is one in which the narrow shotgun house is cut in half and stacked to create an elevated, two-story residence (Figure 59).[169] The Porchdog house consciously extends certain vernacular traditions of the local area in order to participate in what Blackwell deems a new or alternative vernacular.[170]

ANALYSIS

Modern day vernacular architecture "is a local response to environment, to building traditions and is overlaid with an idea of pragmatism."[171] New constructions retain some qualities unique to the culture of the region; however, vernacular architecture today has an aesthetic influence on design as opposed to one simply of function. Blackwell suggests that the intentions of the modern vernacular are credible but the stylistic qualities and localization of vernacular architecture is lost as dwellings have become more interchangeable and less

[167] Marlon Blackwell Architect. "Porchdog House Prototype."
[168] Marlon Blackwell Architect. "Porchdog House Prototype."
[169] The Architectural Review. "Porchdog House by Marlon Blackwell, East Biloxi, Mississippi, USA." July 27, 2010. Accessed November 13, 2012. http://www.architectural-review.com/buildings/dwellings/porchdog-house-by-marlon-blackwell-east-biloxi-mississippi-usa/8603628.article.
[170] Marlon Blackwell, "Architecture in a Landscape of Unholy Unions," Journal of Architectural Education 63, (2009), 93.
[171] Marlon Blackwell, (Department Head and Distinguished Professor of the Fay Jones School of Architecture), interview by Lillian McRae, EJ Ball Building "The Enduring Presence of Vernacular Architecture," Cassette, October 31, 2012.

dependent on culture.[172] What makes the Reed, Cook and Porchdog houses exceptional is that all three are considered true modern iterations of vernacular architecture, not just inspired by vernacular, as they maintain characteristics that are culturally and regionally specific allowing them to fit seamlessly into the landscape as well as into the socio/cultural environment.

A PERSISTANT NEED FOR VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Avi Friedman has been researching the designs of narrow dwellings for several decades. Friedman suggests that the appeal of shotgun houses as well as other narrow-front residences have maintained their worldwide appeal by offering a sense of privacy and green space in a compact configuration.[173] Built in high densities, these housing types offer solutions aimed at reducing the amount of materials used, improving energy efficiency and putting a stop to urban sprawl.[174] This concept is one that recalls ideals important to Post-Industrial society and was confronted by ideals consistent with New Urbanism. Urbanization of the South under the impact of industrialization left the planning of the growing and, consequently, sprawling Southern city up to sanitary and highway engineers.[175] Leaving urban planning up to engineers resulted in suburbs which were planned without regards to aesthetics, culture or regional characteristics that should have guided design and development. Instead, suburbs became meccas for mass produced housing that focused on creating pedestrian-scaled neighborhoods that were catered towards automobile accessibility. Lack of professional, architectural involvement in the design of sprawling American suburbia resulted in the homogenization of the American suburban landscape and led to the demise of the shotgun house, as well as vernacular architectural forms in

[172] Marlon Blackwell, "The Enduring Presence of Vernacular Architecture."

[173] Avi Friedman, Narrow Houses: New Directions in Efficient Design, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010), 13.
[174] Avi Friedman, Narrow Houses: New Directions in Efficient Design, 13.
[175] Edward W. Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh, *The South Builds; new architecture in the Old South,* 9.

general. A new “normal” was established within the suburb and Americans left behind architecture that spoke to the region and culture in favor of the autonomy created by similar housing styles all situated within automobile-oriented subdivisions.

New Urbanism helped to influence the modern construction of narrow houses in a series of rows in order to achieve high densities but also allowed for the ability to produce a more sustainable community planned accordingly to combat environmental issues with efficient responses. The narrow manifestations of contemporary houses have become an interest in both architects and town planners due to recent changes in society. All over the world, people are interested in having more sustainable houses and city plans, which results from a changing demographic where there are a greater number of individual persons, single parents and couples without children who all desire to live in ground-floor units. Many housing projects that are taken on today are built with the intentions of reducing the footprint of the structure. Size constraints do not limit the function or aesthetic qualities of the house but allow for the employment of innovative, and in some cases vernacular, techniques that take factors like lighting and orientation into consideration to minimize the environmental impact of the structure as a whole.

Today, compact housing is used as a means to combat environmental problems caused by urban sprawl. Human expansion into areas that were once reserved for agricultural use have resulted in housing developments that caused environmental destruction. Detached dwellings where all sides of the house are exposed to the elements has attributed to the major problem of overconsumption. Over a single summer, air conditioners are thought to consume the total

energy put out by all other household appliances.[176] The prospect of high density housing in the form of narrow houses allows for a smaller impact to be made on the land by conserving resources such as water and building materials, offering a long-lasting durable structure and better waste management. In order to create a better living environment, Friedman feels that it is important to recognize the interconnectedness between economic, social, environmental and cultural concerns.[177]

While it is not always obvious that the vernacular has been embedded into the theories of modern architecture, there is no doubt that its quintessential principles have continued to undermine a multitude of modern architectural endeavors. According to Huppauf and Umbach, "space and sense of place never disappeared during the process of modernization."[178] In the latter decades of the 20th century, the revival of local and regional traditions became affected a multitude of people. The resurgence of languages as well as vernacular cultures have thrived in the postindustrial world, which suggests that vernacular ideologies are some of the generative principles relative to modernism.[179] Recently, there has been a revived interest in the vernacular that echoes the English Arts and Crafts movement. In large part, the motivation of the movement came from concerns that industrialization would erase the need for buildings and spaces that embody local cultures and regional specificity. In order to preserve these concepts and characteristics, many individuals began to build with a more localized mindset thereby protecting the integrity of an architectural type based on their unique cultural, social and environmental needs. In New Orleans, interest in the redevelopment of the blighted city allowed for the shotgun house to become popular once again as people sought out housing that spoke to cultural, regional

[176]Avi Friedman, Narrow Houses: New Directions in Efficient Design, 179.
[177] Ibid, 180.
[178] Umbach, Maiken, and Bernd Huppauf. Vernacular Modernism. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005, 2.
[179] Ibid, 8.

traditions, or, the vernacular. Today, vernacular architecture aims to inspire designers with characteristics found in local buildings, especially pertaining to their scale which is achieved through a variety of different factors. To achieve this intention, architects focus on many aspects of traditional culture in the form of materials, landscape, local values or even solely the idea that there can be a continuity of the past in the design of the present.[180]

In the 21st century, vernacular architecture continues to have connotations with the past in addition to poverty and underdevelopment.[181] While past vernacular forms may be admired for their role in history and for their aesthetic and functional qualities, rarely are they considered relevant for current housing projects. Many individuals, including architects and planners, feel that vernacular architecture takes a step backwards in the progress of design.[182] However, Oliver believes that during our lifetime, vernacular structures will need to play a key role in combating the exponential population growth expected to reach 9 billion by the year 2050.[183] Housing a population of this size will require the principles of vernacular building traditions to aid in managing a wide range of issues including, but not limited to, disaster preparation and issues regarding sanitation.

[180] Richardson, New Vernacular Architecture, 6.
[181] Asquith, Vernacular Architecture in the Twenty-First Century- Theory, education and practice,1.
[182] Ibid, 1.
[183] Ibid, 1.

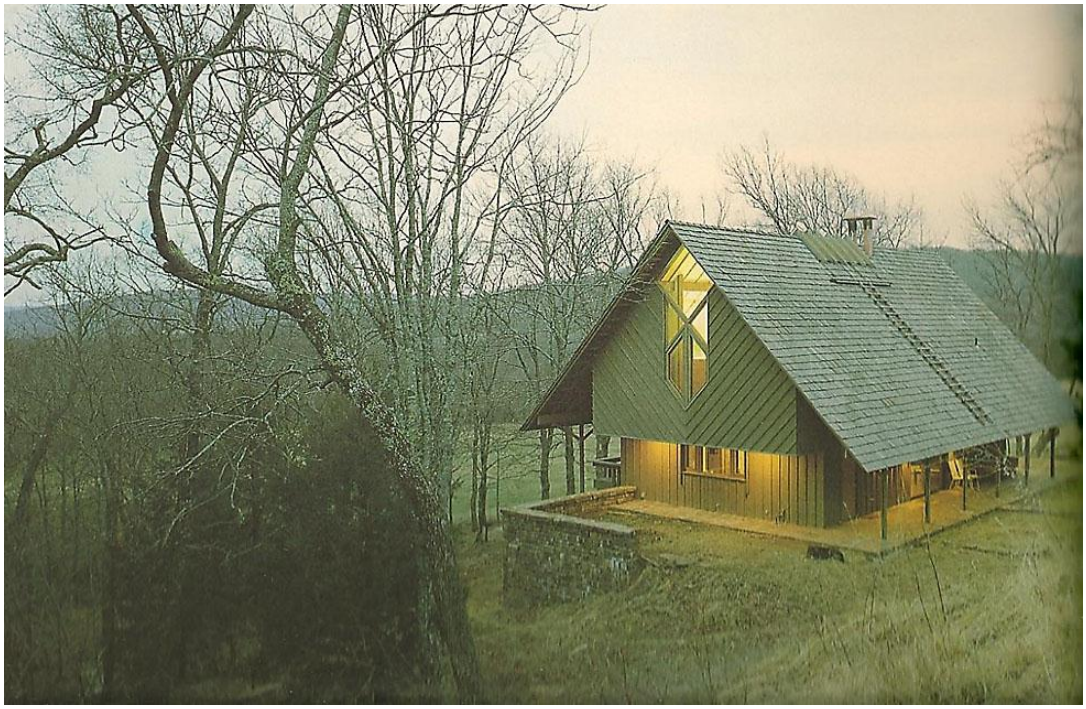

Figure 47. Roy Reed house by E. Fay Jones in Hogeye, AR view from the rear of the house.

Figure 48. Roy Reed house by E. Fay Jones in Hogeye, AR, view from the front façade.

Figure 49. The form and exterior façade of the Roy Reed House is inspired by a typical wood-clad barn that could be found throughout the immediate region.

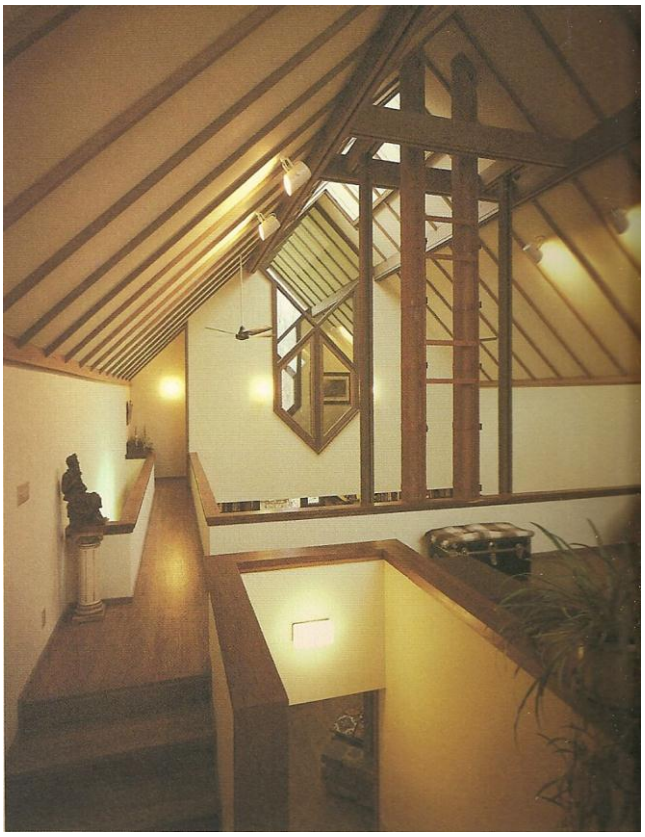

Figure 50. Interior view of the Roy Reed house by E. Fay Jones, note simple details demonstrated by the woodwork.

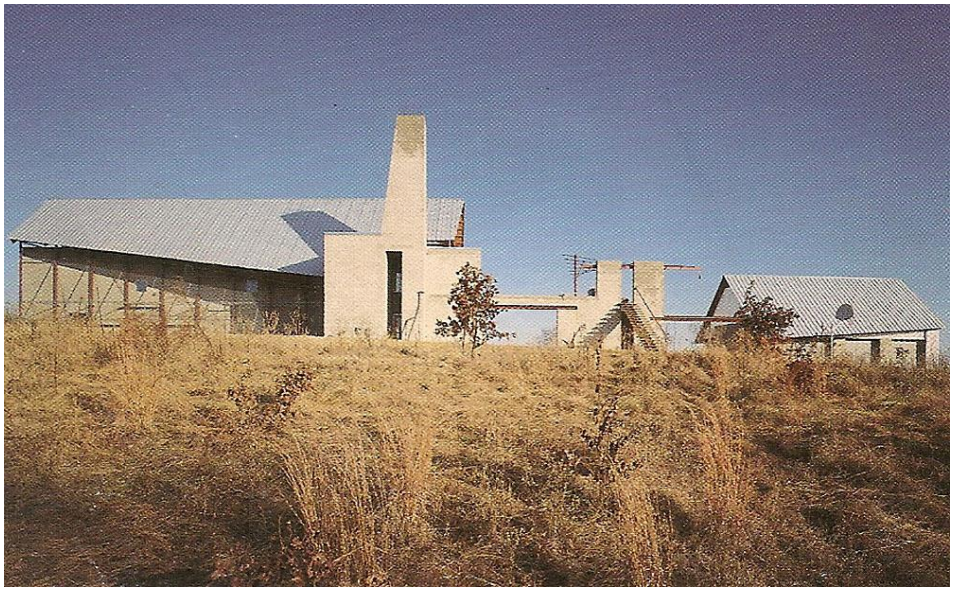

Figure 51. The Cook house by Samuel Mockbee and Coleman Coker, Oxford, Mississippi.

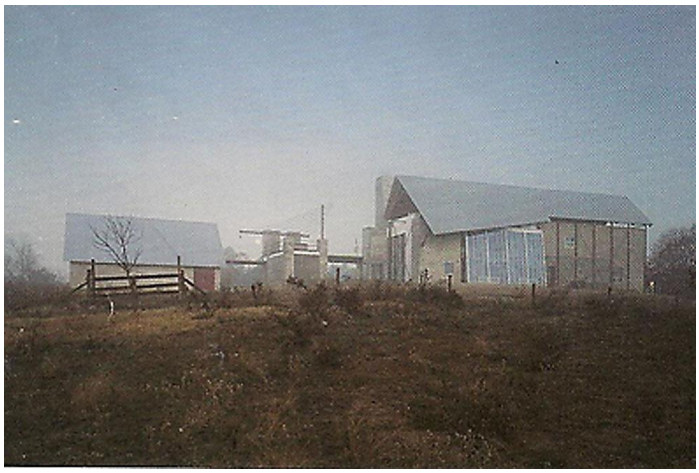

Figure 52. The form of the Cook House was inspired by trailer house and the additions that were made to them in order to cement their presence in the southern landscape.

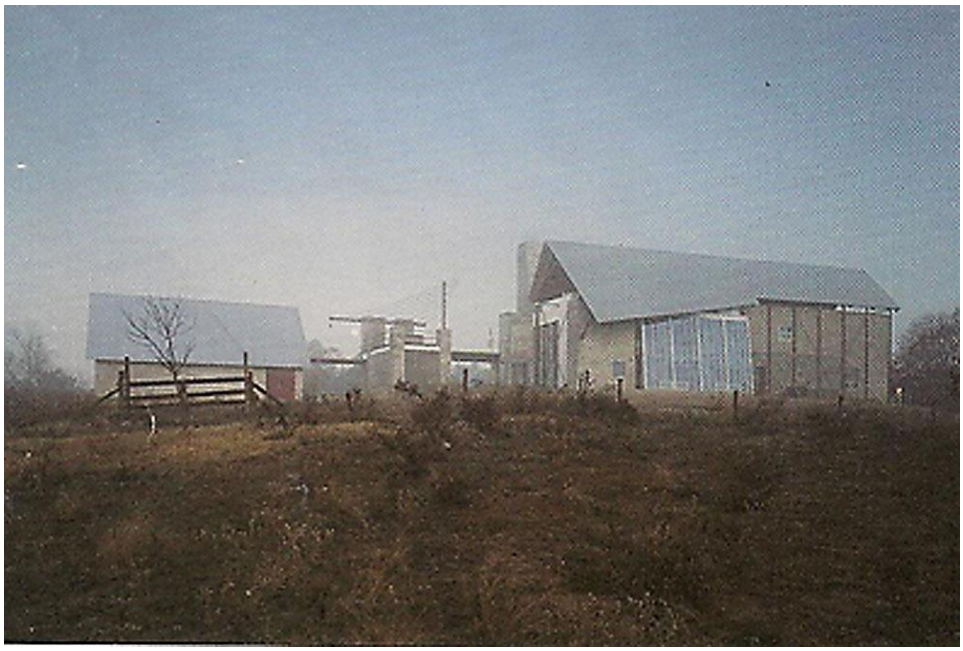

Figure 53. The Cook house exterior by Samuel Mockbee and Coleman Coker.

Figure 54. The Cook House exterior with attention paid to the glazed window and industrial materials.

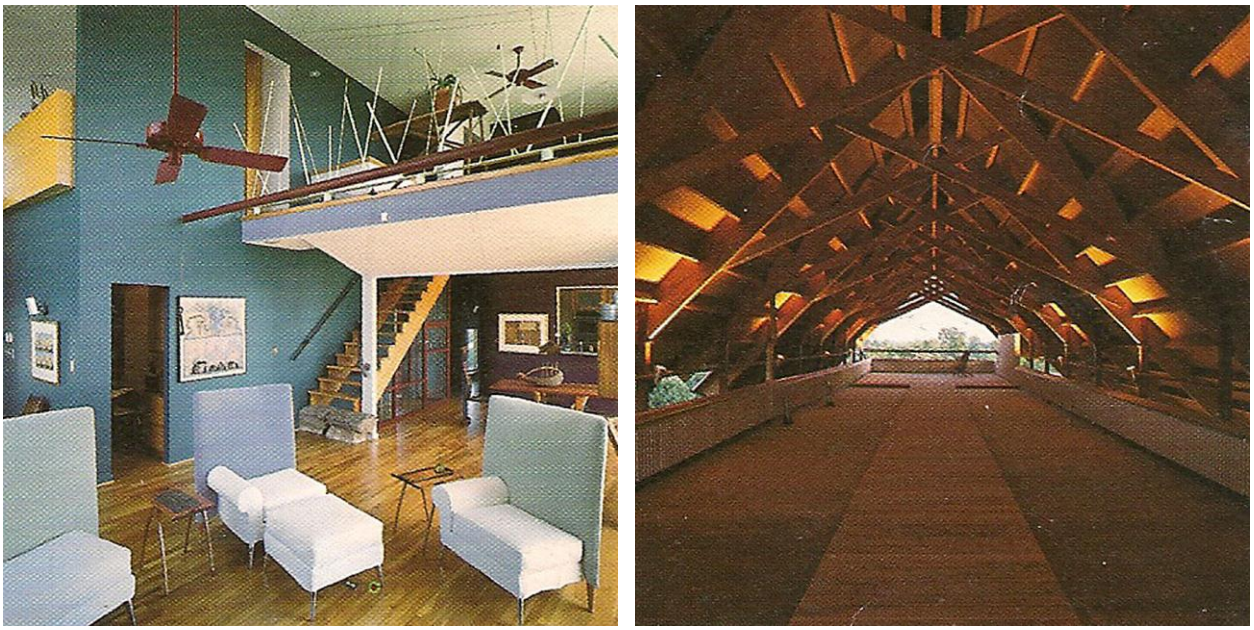

Figure 55. Interior views of the Cook House.

Figure 56. Porchdog house by Marlon Blackwel, Biloxi, Mississippi.

Figure 57. View of the elevated porch as seen on the rear of the Porchdog house.

Figure 58. Porchdog House and front stoop which engages the property with the streetscape.

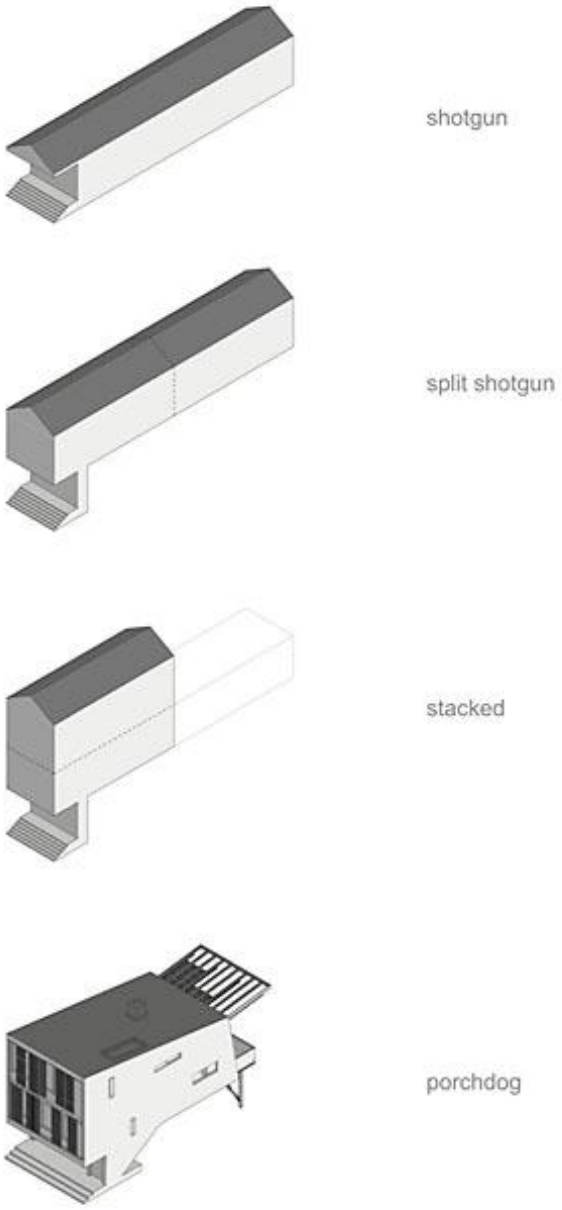

Figure 59. Diagram of the Porchdog House in which the shotgun house can be clearly seen as a means of inspiration for the prototype.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE ENDURING PRESENCE OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE AND THE FUTURE OF THE SHOTGUN HOUSE

Whether a shotgun house is a single barrel or double barrel type with four bays and a camelback addition, all shotgun houses, both traditional and contemporary typologies, have very similar forms and proportions. It is the sole architectural feature that has endured throughout history in regards to the typology. Although a shotgun house can exhibit any number of styles in regards to the façade, it is the narrow form of the house that establishes a boundary for the design and helps to define the shotgun house as a dwelling composed of extremely slender proportions in order to maintain the essence of the traditional typology. Decorations and styles applied to the house do not define the typology in any way as there is not a single style that is deeply embedded in the design and indigenous characteristics of the house. Throughout the evolution of the shotgun house typology, the form, as opposed to the style, has been a constant figure in the design of the house, suggesting that it is the shape and configuration that are the key defining components of the shotgun. Formal architectural analysis of the evolution of the shotgun house in America, focusing primarily on changes in the plan, elevation as well as the treatment of the façade, confirms that the true shotgun typologies are those which have retained organizational and formal qualities associated with the traditional housing type.

While the styles vary from house to house, two formal architectural elements are always present in both the contemporary and traditional iterations of the shotgun, the porch and the narrow form. The front porch is an essential cultural feature with roots in the vernacular that stimulates communication as well as interconnectedness between people via the streetscape. The shotgun house has a major presence in dense, urban environments which adds to the importance of the house as a facilitator of social interaction, a part of southern, vernacular culture that

remains present in modern iterations of the house. The vernacular roots of the house have lent themselves to creating a housing type that maximizes efficiency and has environmentally sustainable features appealing to a variety of people worldwide. The contemporary shotgun house is a practical typology as it occupies a small area of land, which in turn causes less harm to its surrounding environment. The fact that many of the vernacular, architectural attributes such as using orientation to maximize heat gain and airflow despite standard and easily accessible technological innovations demonstrates the house as a self-sustaining entity that can thrive on its own.

The shotgun house is no longer being dictated by practical ventilation nor is it making the conscious effort to maintain ties with its Haitian architectural roots. Despite this, the house still strives to maintain its practical proportions and form. The new trend in architecture celebrates the "narrow house" or dwellings with street-facing exteriors that measure no more than 25 feet across. They have been built throughout history and have continued to thrive due to their sense of privacy and compact layout. The narrow house, like the shotgun, can be built in high densities to alleviate problems caused by urban sprawl and improve energy efficiency once the space is inhabited. The importance of occupying a space with practical and energy saving characteristics is one way that the narrow house is reverting back to the intentions of the original shotgun house. A change in demographics has popularized the new take on the shotgun now that society has more single parents and/or couples without children. In many cases, the rectilinear form remains but multiple stories, more walls and offset doors have made the original plan more complex. [184]

[184] Avi Friedman, *Narrow Houses: New Directions in Efficient Design* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010), 1.

This research has revealed an important distinction between vernacular and typologies. A typology is organizational and pertains to spatial configurations of buildings, while the vernacular is a response to local and environmental forces. To design vernacular architecture is to design with local ideologies in mind while typology can transcend the local and is a persistent element over time. Today, vernacular architecture acts as an aesthetically influential medium that inspires modern buildings to make reference to the surrounding local and regional culture- "Vernacular is a place to start but never end."[185] While vernacular architecture is a point of departure for many 21st century designs, it resonates with nostalgia as opposed to the practicality of the 19th and 20th centuries. To be inspired by vernacular architecture is to take the aesthetic qualities of the building and apply them to new constructions. Inspired vernacular is a form of vernacular architecture which aims to embody the aesthetic qualities that define the once vernacular structures of the area. While an inspired building may look like a building type that is culturally and regionally rooted, it is merely a façade which acts as a mask over an edifice. Particularly in the South, vernacular architecture and the inspiration that it has had on buildings in the 21st century is centered on creating a comfortable home that is reminiscent of the past.

[185] Marlon Blackwell, "The Enduring Presence of Vernacular Architecture."

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